

**A qualitative investigation of previously disadvantaged adult men's psychological experiences of a sport development programme**

by  
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## **Declaration**

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the authorship owner thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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## **Abstract**

Considering the growing poverty and unemployment in South Africa, there is clearly an urgent need for development, particularly among the historically disadvantaged communities where the level of inequality is the highest. Sport has been viewed by a number of scholars as a possible vehicle for developing communities. In this regard, involvement in sport and exercise has been linked to psychological wellbeing, capacity building and skills development among adolescents, which leads to the empowerment of individuals. This study investigates the functioning of a Sport Development Academy, which uses canoeing as a mechanism to improve the quality of lives of people living in a rural community in The Valley of a Thousand Hills in Kwa-Zulu Natal. This qualitative investigation targeted a group of seven young men, between the ages of nineteen and twenty-nine years old, who were interviewed in order to examine their lived experiences as a result of participating in the Academy and the extent to which the Academy impacted positively on their lives. The Positive Youth Development Paradigm, Bronfenbrenner's Eco-Systems Theory and the Athlete-Coach relationship view, was used as a lens through which the research findings were examined. The Athletes in the Academy learnt a number of values and skills such as hard work, determination and respect. They became involved in pro-social behaviors as opposed to anti-social behaviors due to their participation in the sport development programme. This participation resulted in the gaining of social capital which can lead to upward social mobility. The capacity of these athletes has also been improved. These above factors improve the psychological wellbeing of the individuals and equip them with essential values and skills that make them more employable. The research findings suggest that the involvement of the seven young men in the Academy produced a number of positive impacts. Therefore, the results of the research indicate that sport can be used, to a certain extent, as a vehicle through which development can occur.

Keywords: Sport, development, psychological wellbeing, South Africa, apartheid, community development, empowerment, sport as a vehicle for development, sport development programmes, canoeing.

## Opsomming

Groeïende armoede en werkloosheid in Suid-Afrika dui dat daar duidelik 'n dringende behoefte vir ontwikkeling, veral onder die voorheen-benadeelde gemeenskappe is waar die vlak van ongelykheid die hoogste is. Sommige navorsers sien sport as 'n moontlike voertuig vir die ontwikkeling van hierdie gemeenskappe. In hierdie verband word betrokkenheid in sport en oefening gekoppel aan sielkundige welstand, kapasiteitsbou en die ontwikkeling van vaardighede onder tieners wat lei tot die bemagtiging van individue. Hierdie studie ondersoek die funksionering van 'n sportakademie wat gebruik maak van die sport kanovaart as 'n meganisme om die gehalte van die lewens van mense te verbeter wat woon in die landelike gemeenskap van die Vallei van 'n Duisend Heuwels in Kwa -Zulu Natal. Hierdie kwalitatiewe ondersoek van 'n groep van sewe jong mans, tussen die ouderdomme van negentien en nege-en-twintig jaar oud, het bestaan uit onderhoud wat gevoer is om hul ondervindinge te ondersoek as 'n gevolg van hul deelname aan die Akademie en die mate waarin dit 'n positiewe impak op hul lewens gehad het. Die Positiewe Jeugontwikkeling Paradigma, Bronfenbrenner se Ekosistemoëteorie en die atleet - afrigter verhouding is gebruik as 'n lens waardeur die bevindinge ondersoek is. Die atlete in die Akademie het 'n aantal waardes en vaardighede aangeleer soos harde werk, deursettingsvermoë en respek. Hulle het betrokke geraak in pro-sosiale gedrag in teenstelling met anti-sosiale gedrag as gevolg van hul deelname in die ontwikkelingsprogram. Dit het gelei tot die toename van hul sosiale kapitaal wat gelei het tot groter sosiale mobiliteit. Die kapasiteit van hierdie atlete is ook verbeter. Die bogenoemde faktore het gelei tot die verbetering van hul sielkundige welstand en om hulle toe te rus met noodsaaklike waardes en vaardighede om hulle meer geskik te maak vir toekomstige loopbane. Die navorsing dui verder daarop dat die betrokkenheid van die sewe jong mans in die Akademie 'n aantal positiewe invloede tot gevolg het. Die resultate

van die navorsing dui dus daarop dat sport tot 'n sekere mate gebruik kan word as 'n middel waardeur ontwikkeling kan plaasvind .

Sleutelwoorde: Sport, ontwikkeling, sielkundige welstand, Suid-Afrika, apartheid, gemeenskapsontwikkeling, bemagtiging, sport as 'n voertuig vir ontwikkeling, sport - ontwikkelingsprogramme, kanovaart.

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The athletes of the Academy, thank you for willingly participating in the research and giving of your time to participate in the study. You have all inspired me so much and your experiences will hopefully be of great value to others.

## **Dedications**

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Anthony and Sharon, who have always supported me, guided me in the right direction and inspired me through their own accomplishments, to apply myself towards achieving my ambitions.



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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background and Context of the Study

There is a substantial body of literature describing the potential health, psychological and social benefits to individuals who participate regularly in sport and exercise (Blair, 2000; Chathukulam & John, 2002; Fung & Wright, 2001). Participation in sport is also associated with positive developmental outcomes such as improved problem solving abilities, control of one's emotions, and improvement of skills in social situations (Holt, Kingsley, Tink & Scherer, 2011). Claims have also been made that participation in sport promotes personal empowerment, improved self-image and self-esteem (Blinde & Taub, 1999; Danish & Nellen, 1997). Another strand of literature suggests that sport may aid community and national development by contributing to establishing a shared sense of identity and promoting feelings of belonging and connectedness (Malebo, Van Eeden & Wissing, 2007). It has also been suggested that sport might act as a vehicle for community development with sport being cited as having the potential to achieve a range of outcomes including nation building, empowerment, capacity building, life skills training and self-reliance (Blair, 2000; Chathukulam & John, 2002; Fung & Wright, 2001). In this context, Mansuri and Rao (2003) define capacity building as promoting an individual's ability to make decisions, enhancing their problem solving skills, and improving their ability to set and achieve goals. An argument is advanced that this kind of capacity building through sport, leads to empowerment and equips individuals with skills needed to gain employment (Masuri and Rao, 2003).

A number of *Sport for Development* programmes have been developed, on the basis of claims that have been made of the potential for sport to act as a vehicle for development and transformation. Despite the widespread support of sport as a tool for development and transformation, some sources highlight the lack of scientific evidence of the effectiveness of

sport programmes to achieve these lofty aims (Coalter, 2010; Levermore, 2008; Lyras, 2007). In this regard, sources such as Lyras and Peachey (2011) note that the ability to promote positive social change, through the use of sport programmes, is minimal. The contention of these scholars is that there is a lack of a sound theoretical framework and limited scientific evidence to support the view that positive social change occurs through sport development programmes.

Although a number of community sport programmes have been established in South Africa, it is not always clear in the literature what these programmes aim to achieve or what the experiences are of those who participate in them. An argument is thus made in this dissertation that there is value in exploring the impact of sport development programmes on those who participate in them and documenting the lived experience of those who are identified as the ‘beneficiaries’ of these programmes.

This qualitative study sets out to explore the experiences of a group of seven young black men from The Valley of a Thousand Hills<sup>1</sup> in rural Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN) who have been actively involved in a sport development academy. The sport development academy was established in KZN within the uMgungundlovu District Municipality. KZN is situated on the eastern coast of South Africa and is one of the country’s nine provinces. The uMgungundlovu municipality lies east of Durban and the N3 cuts through it connecting Durban with Pietermaritzburg (IDP, 2013). The total population in the district municipality is 1,066,152. The area is poverty stricken with 57% of the population earning below R38, 400 per annum. A total of 30,4% of the population is unemployed and this statistic increases to 39,4% for the youth aged between 15 and 34 years of age. Additionally, education levels are low within the region with only 30,1% of the population over 20 years of age having passed their

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<sup>1</sup> For the remainder of the dissertation, the term ‘The Valley’ will be used when referring to The Valley of a Thousand Hills.



Matriculation examination and only 7.9% having studied at tertiary level.

Access to basic infrastructure for families living in uMgungundlovu is typically poor, with less than 45% of households having access to piped water within their dwellings, flush toilets and refuse removal services (Statistics South Africa, 2011). This region is clearly in need of ‘development’ and the individuals who reside there might be characterized as disadvantaged with regard to their access to basic resources, employment opportunities and education.

The Sport Development Academy<sup>2</sup> described in this dissertation was established in 2009 with the explicit goal of improving the lives of historically disadvantaged individuals living in The Valley, through assisting them to become canoeists and compete in river races around South Africa. The athletes who participate in this academy are also involved in other sports such as cycling and running and compete in a number of different races around the country. The experiences of the young men who have participated in the academy are used as the basis for a critical discussion of the potential role and possible limitations of using sport as a vehicle for community development in South Africa.

The founder of the Academy<sup>3</sup>, one of South Africa’s elite river paddlers, started this canoeing development programme for disadvantaged youth in The Valley. The Academy focuses on using sport as a mechanism to change the lives of historically disadvantaged young men. The founder focuses on teaching the young men life skills, supporting them to become elite athletes, and provides them with a means through which they can provide for

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<sup>2</sup> For the remainder of the dissertation, the term ‘Academy’ will be used when referring to the sport development academy that has been used as a case study.

<sup>3</sup> For the remainder of the dissertation, the term founder will be used when referring to the founder of the Sport Development Academy that has been used as a case study.

their families. Although initially the primary aim of the Academy was to enable black men from The Valley to participate competitively in the Dusi Canoe Marathon, the founder also anticipated that the venture would have an impact on the broader community. When I interviewed the founder about his aims for the academy he stated *“I wanted to make a difference in The Valley”*. He then went on to explain that this desire to have a positive impact on the community living in The Valley has become the main focus of the Academy. He expressed this by saying, *“I think that making a difference in The Valley is the main goal of the organization”*. The history, current structure and aims of the Academy are presented in more detail in Chapter five of this dissertation.

Annually, The Valley plays host to a large number of canoeists and their supporters as they prepare for and participate in the acclaimed Dusi Canoe Marathon. According to the Dusi Canoe Marathon website (n.d) the race was started in 1952 and takes place on the Umgeni and Umsindusi Rivers. It starts in Pietermaritzburg and ends 120km further down the river in Durban, KZN. This three-day marathon requires both paddling down the river and running over land whilst carrying a canoe. Every year the race category changes and either takes the form of a K1 (one person canoe) or K2 (two person canoe) race. It is the biggest canoeing event in South Africa in terms of entrants and usually has about 1500 paddlers participating in the event. It is a physically challenging race and takes place during the middle of February, which is one of the hottest months of the year and characterized by high temperatures and humidity in The Valley. This athletic event has a distinctly gendered and sexist history; for many years participation in the race was restricted to white men. In 1981 black athletes were allowed to participate in the race for the first time. In the same year female paddlers were allowed for the first time to compete in the race in a K2 (a two person canoe). It was only in 1985 that women were allowed to take part in a K1 (but even then they had to be accompanied by a male paddler, presumably for their own ‘safety’). In the nineties

there was tension between the people living in The Valley and the paddlers. There were reports of canoeists being mugged and having stones thrown at them while paddling. In 2008 a black man won the race for the first time (Dusi Canoe Marathon website, n.d).

## **1.2 Research Questions**

The focus of the research will be to investigate the experiences of a group of athletes purposefully selected from the Academy. The study specifically seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How does this group of young men describe their experience of participating in a sport development programme?
2. What do these young men identify as the advantages and disadvantages of participating in a sport development programme?
3. What do these young men describe as the impact of their participation in this programme?
4. What insights do these young men have on how sports development programmes of this nature might be enhanced?
5. How do these men see the potential of sport to be used as a means through which development can occur?

## **1.3 Overview of the Dissertation**

In this chapter I have provided the introduction to the research and outlined the background to the study. The chapter thus sets out the overall purpose of the study, the aims of the investigation, and describes the context in which the study was conducted.

In Chapter two, in the literature review, I will begin with a definition of key concepts. This will be followed by a critical examination of the literature describing the positive impact of participation in sport. The literature review section will also examine and describe the

concept of ‘sport for development’. A critical discussion is presented which attempts to ‘de-idealize’ sport by reflecting how sport as a social institution has been (and continues to be) employed as a mechanism of exclusion, as a performance of ‘whiteness’ and as a means to police gender boundaries. Sport is also discussed within the socio-political history of South Africa. This literature provides the context in which sport for development programmes are constructed and implemented.

In Chapter three I will present the theoretical framework which has been used to make sense of the research findings. I describe the Positive Youth Development paradigm as well as Bronfenbrenner’s Eco-Systems Model. I also include the Athlete-Coach relationship as a third lens through which the the data collected in this study can be viewed.

In Chapter four I will describe the qualitative methodology of the research. This will include a discussion of the epistemological stance adopted in this study as well as critical reflection on the appropriateness of this methodology for answering the research questions. I describe the sampling procedures and discuss the data collection and analysis procedures in detail. Ethical considerations will be presented followed by a discussion on reflexivity and trustworthiness of the research.

In Chapter five, the history and formation of the Academy will be discussed in order to give the reader a sense of how the Academy is structured to promote participation in sport, nurture athletic talent, and enable personal growth and skills development, and build confidence and empower the athletes. Consideration is also given to how the Academy functions to enable the athletes to access educational and employment opportunities and hence accrue economic benefits and financial rewards. A discussion is also offered of how the Academy intends to achieve social development and health promotion as well as the challenges that have been faced in achieving these goals.

In Chapter six, I present the data analysis. The themes and categories will be examined and discussed in terms of the experiences and perceptions of athletes of the Academy. This includes a discussion of sporting skills; personal impacts relating to values and life skills; social aspects associated with interpersonal skills and connectedness; having exposure to educational opportunities; and economic benefits. This will be followed by a discussion of the relationship that has surfaced between the athletes and the founder and will conclude with family aspects and challenges raised in the research.

In chapter seven the discussion of the research in line with the literature and the theoretical framework will be presented. Conclusions will be drawn in terms of the overall results of the investigation. The limitations of the research will then be examined. The dissertation will conclude with a personal reflection of the research.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The benefits of participation in sport and physical activity are well documented. As such sports programmes are often idealized as a way of promoting health, developing skills, establishing relationships, and promoting community development and nation building. This idealization of sport and the foregrounding of its potential benefits obscure the fact that the performance of and participation in sport is sometimes a deeply political and gendered activity, which privileges some individuals and excludes and marginalizes others. Recognizing the political dimension of sport highlights the way in which sport is sometimes used to achieve social control and maintain a particular social order.

As a result of the potential benefits of sport and physical activity, it has been suggested that sport programmes have the potential to be used in South Africa as part of a development strategy. Sport development programmes are seen as providing opportunities for development especially among historically disadvantaged individuals living in low-income communities in South Africa.

This chapter will commence by defining sport and exercise (both of which are key concepts in this research). This will be followed by examining the literature on the positive impact of participation in sport and the concept ‘sport for development’ and will also look at sport development programmes. A discussion is also presented which attempts to ‘de-idealize’ sport by describing how it is used politically to marginalize (and exclude) and maintain racial and gender divisions.

### **2.2 Definition of Key Concepts**

A distinction is drawn in the literature between ‘physical activity’ on the one hand and ‘sport and exercise’ on the other. Casperson, Powell and Christensen (1985) and the

World Health Organization (2007), define physical activity as movement by the body entailing the expenditure of energy and the use of skeletal muscles. Amusa, Toriola, Onyewadume and Dhaliwal (2008) describe physical activity as an activity that requires substantial expenditure of energy. Physical activity refers to structured and planned exercise involving movement of the body. The activity can be anaerobic such as lifting weights or aerobic such as running (Macera, Hootman & Sniezek, 2003).

Sport and exercise are much more narrowly defined as forms of physical activity that are organized and take place for reasons of health, well-being, competitiveness, recreation and play (Edwards & Edwards, 2011). The World Health Organization (WHO) refers to sport as a more organized and structured activity, and exercise is seen as movement aimed at improving one's fitness involving repetitiveness and structure. Both of these concepts are subsets of physical activity (World Health Organization, 2007).

The definition of sport offered above focuses attention on the fact that this form of physical activity is defined by both the context (i.e. they are organized activities) and the individuals' motivation for participation in the activity (i.e. to promote health and wellbeing, to compete against others, for recreation and to have fun). Because sport is a more structured and organized activity it is believed to have numerous potential benefits to those who participate regularly.

### **2.3 The Positive Impact of Participation in Sport**

There is a large body of literature describing the potential psychological and health benefits of sport to individual participants. It has also been suggested that sport might act as a vehicle for community development with sport being cited as having the potential to achieve a range of outcomes including nation building, empowerment, capacity building, life skills training and self-reliance (Blair, 2000; Chathukulam & John, 2002; Fung & Wright, 2001).

The evidence for these potential positive aspects of participation in sport is presented below. Amusa et al. (2008) report that participation in sport is linked to increased efficiency in the work place and improved quality of life.

### **2.3.1 Physical (health) Benefits of Participation in Sport**

Macera et al. (2003), as well as Danish and Nellen (1997), report that participation in sport is an important contributor to health status. Participating in sport reduces the likelihood of death and disability as a result of hypertension, diabetes, coronary heart disease, colon cancer, and pain associated with arthritis (Macera et al., 2003). Other authors explain that sport leads to a reduced risk of death caused by cancer, osteoporosis, obesity, diabetes, stroke and cardiovascular disease (Fox, 2000; Schomer & Drake, 2001). Health related quality of life is improved by participation in sport as a result of improved physical functioning (Macera et al., 2003). It is further noted by Wann (2006) that sport leads to health promotion and disease prevention.

### **2.3.2 Mental Health and Psychological Benefits of Participation in Sport**

Wankel (1993) emphasizes that apart from the health benefits of sport, positive psychological outcomes have become increasingly evident as a result of regular participation. Holt et al. (2011) expand on this line of thought and note that involvement in sport can be linked to certain developmental outcomes such as accomplishment of one's goals, improved academic performance, solving problems and control of one's emotions. Brunelle, Danish and Forneris (2007) pronounce that there have been claims that the psychological development of adolescents can be enhanced through sport. However the author does not expand on this nor explains how this development takes place.



A claim is frequently made that there is a link between participation in sport and exercise and psychological wellbeing. In this context, psychological wellbeing can be understood to have six different components, namely purpose in life, personal growth, autonomy, environmental mastery, self acceptance and positive relations with others (Edwards & Edwards, 2011). Malebo et al. (2007) found that psychological wellbeing is associated with factors such as self-efficacy, optimism, satisfaction with life, positive affect and a sense of coherence.

Malebo et al. (2007) conducted a study on sport participation and psychosocial wellbeing amongst black university students in South Africa. These authors note that psychological wellbeing and psychosocial development were significantly higher among people who participated in sport compared to those who did not. These positive outcomes included improved mood, optimism, meaningfulness in life, competence and confidence. According to Edwards' (2003) study, which was conducted amongst health club members, those who exercised regularly reported more positively on their psychological wellbeing compared to those who did not exercise regularly.

Smith and Smoll (1997) claim that sport programmes developed for the youth present a medium for the development of positive psychosocial attributes. These include coping mechanisms, self-assertiveness, cooperativeness, perseverance and motivation towards achievement. Authors such as Fox (2000) have linked physical activity to a number of positive impacts on the mental health of individuals. The author has said that there is a relationship between decreased risk of developing depression and physical exercise. Fox (2000) further notes that physical activity has been effective in treating depression and the author has compared this to being as effective as psychotherapeutic interventions. It is noted that when involved in planned extracurricular activities, the youth are able to obtain and

exercise intellectual, physical and social skills, which can be used in other environments such as school (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Eccles & Templeton, 2002).

Social networks are established through extracurricular sporting and leisure activities, which help support the individual. A feeling of belonging and a sense of agency are also developed through being involved in an organized setting compared to unstructured extracurricular activities (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Eccles & Templeton, 2002).

Research conducted by Blinde and Taub (1999), on students with physical and sensory disabilities, reveals that they are faced with problems such as lack of personal empowerment and low self-esteem. These authors view sport as an important development tool for this group of people. The authors categorized these students as a disadvantaged group that has negative perceptions of their own competence, self-efficiency and capabilities. Blinde and Taub (1999) recommend sport as a tool for personal empowerment of marginalized groups, as certain skills that are learnt through sport can also be applied in other areas of life.

Although numerous literature sources have confirmed the view that sport participation leads to a number of psychosocial benefits, there are authors who have adopted a more critical stance and questioned these findings. For example, Malebo et al. (2007) maintains that one could argue that people who experience psychological wellbeing choose to participate in sport and it is thus meaningless to simply show a correlation between 'well being' and participation in sport. However Malebo et al. (2007) found that there was a positive link between non-participation in sport and factors such as pessimism, lower positive mood and lower levels of competence.

### 2.3.3 Development of Skills, Values and Attitudes

Danish and Nellen (1997) note that participation in sport is extremely important in the development of children in terms of teaching them different life skills such as analytical behavior, problem solving and decision making skills. Researchers such as Eccles & Gootman (2002) have emphasized that participation in physical activities provide young people with the opportunity to learn skills, which help them to handle the responsibilities of childhood and adolescence. Acquiring these skills acts as a protective factor, which can promote healthy development (Eccles & Gootman, 2002).

It has been observed, according to Kleiber and Roberts (1981), that sport can be seen as a medium for learning the skills associated with values such as self-control, persistence, responsibility, courage, risk taking and conformity. However, there is limited empirical evidence to support this claim (Shields & Bredemeier, 2001).

The previous section has highlighted how sport leads to the development of skills. The development of life skills assists in a better understanding of one's values as well as being able to get along with and communicate better with others (Boyd, Herring & Briers, 1992).

Values have an influence on one's decisions or behavior. Lee, Whitehead, Ntoumanis & Hatzigeorgiadis (2008) propose that "sport develops character" and further explain that through sport, moral attitudes are developed (p. 588). Plato (1920) claims that "the moral value of exercises and sports far outweigh the physical value" (p. 46). Furthermore, McEwan (1991) exclaims that sport participation leads to development of the certain qualities that build character including loyalty, self discipline, unselfishness, leadership, co-operation and determination. However, some authors such as Lee et al. (2008) note that little attention has been given to values developed through sport in sport psychology.

“Upward social mobility assists in overcoming the prevalent problems of poverty faced by the majority of South Africans” (Clark & Burnett, 2010, p. 141). Social Capital refers to the resources that can be acquired by an individual or group as a result of being involved in a network of people. Upward social mobility is increased through an individuals social capital. According to Clarke and Burnett (2010) one of the key components said to be a part of South Africa’s society is the term *Ubuntu*. This refers to the connectedness between people, helping one another in the “spirit of reciprocity”, and implies that one is a person because of others (Clarke & Burnett, 2010, p. 141). Coleman (1994) notes that the generation of social capital and networking is a key contributor to the survival of households in impoverished communities. Sport programmes, which are said to be used as a “tool for development”, have been designed to generate social capital (Clark & Burnett, 2010, p. 142).

Kaufmann and Wolff (2010) note that sport can and ought to be used as a vehicle for social transformation. These authors have suggested that through sport, positive social change can occur through the promotion of values such as cohesiveness, awareness of others, respect and cooperation. The development of individuals in terms of morals is dependent on the context, structure, methods and conditions of the sport programme (Lyras & Peachey, 2011). Henricks (2006) notes that responsibility (within sports group); hard work, respect and character are thought to prevail through involvement in sports. This view of sport is from that of Emile Durkheim who also sees sport programmes as “schools of asceticism” (p. 75).

It has been suggested that values and attitudes learnt through sport can be transferred to other environments, such as work and school (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Eccles & Templeton, 2002; Holt et al. 2011; Smith & Smoll, 1997). It seems to me as though the literature provides evidence that sport promotes positive pro-social values but it fails to provide information regarding the exact values that one develops.

#### **2.3.4 Benefits of Sport: Coincidental or by Deliberate Design?**

A growing body of literature argues that sport *per se* does not have inherent benefits for those who participate. Rather sport has the potential (under specific circumstances) to have a positive impact on individuals' physical health and psychosocial wellbeing. Sport is thus only seen in a context in which development can occur if certain criteria are met or deliberately created.

Petitpas, Cornelius & Van Raalte (2008), explained that there are certain circumstances necessary for social and psychological outcomes for children and adolescents to become amplified through sport participation. These circumstances include the following:

1. Activities need to be designed in such a way that they are stimulating and appealing; group cooperation and personal mastery need to be emphasized; members need to feel acknowledged by their peers.
2. External effects need to be considered such as monitoring by parents; positive relationships amongst peers; involvement within the community; and positive relationships with concerned adults.
3. Internal effects need to be considered such as skills, which are learnt in the context of sport, for example self-management and resistance skills. These need to be transferred to other areas of the participants' life (Petitpas et al. 2008).

Remembering that sport is only a context in which potential benefits can be realized is important in the context of sport for development. Since it prompts us to ask 'what are the conditions under which sport might contribute to the development of individuals and communities?' This is an idea, which is discussed further below.

## **2.4 Sport for Development**

Because of the potential health and psychosocial advantages of sport, it has been suggested that sport can be used both as a vehicle for development and as a context in which development can be promoted. While it intuitively makes sense that sport has the potential to contribute to development it is not always clear what is meant by development in this context. Neither is it always apparent who or what exactly is being developed through sport. As will become apparent in the discussion that follows, the term ‘sport development programme’ is sometimes taken to refer to any programme that deliberately sets about developing the individual (through promoting life skills, values and personal empowerment). At other times the term is taken to refer to any programme aimed at developing the sporting potential and competitiveness of athletes from communities that do not have access to opportunities to participate in sport (i.e. recognizing and developing sporting talent among individuals from historically disadvantaged communities in the interests of promoting the sport). Furthermore there is often an implicit assumption that if individuals are developed the benefits of this will flow to the community and that community development will follow from sport development programmes aimed at developing individuals.

### **2.4.1 Definitions of Development**

The focus of this dissertation is on the relationship between sport and development. Development is a problematic concept that has a variety of definitions due to its multidisciplinary nature. Development can be defined as the meeting of basic human needs. These include access to resources, enough food, shelter, safety, and being treated with respect and dignity (Peet & Hartwick, 2009). In an economic sense, development can be defined as a movement from a non-industrialized, backward, poor and agrarian economy towards an industrialized economy where the standard of living for the population is acceptable for all and a comprehensive welfare and education structure is present (Hargreaves, 1997). Within

this definition of development, the implicit goal is modernization and reduction of poverty. Peet and Hartwick (2009) define development as improving the world and initiating change from the bottom rather than the top. These authors note that development is concerned with human emancipation as well as self-emancipation. These views can be aligned to those articulated by Amartya Sen (1999), who defines development in terms of freedom, which refers to individuals having control over their own affairs, creating their own livelihoods and taking part in self-governance. Peet and Hartwick (2009) explain that development is multi-dimensional and entails the improvement of social, cultural, political and economic conditions. These scholars provide initial insights into the topic by referring to the views of Karl Marx who defined development as being exploitive, contradictory and competitive because it involves the uneven distribution of capital among some classes and countries. Karl Marx, in his book, *Das Kapital*, refers to the “unbridled exploitation of labor-power by the capitalist” (Marx, 1906, p. 1342). He continues and discusses the process where the owners of the factors of production, under the guise of development, use the work force to further their own economic condition (Marx, 1906, p 1434). For Marx development is a problematic concept since it can simply result in further exploitation of disempowered and marginalized individuals who do not have access to the means of production.

In psychology, the concept of development is frequently associated with concepts such as self-actualization and empowerment (Mansuri & Rao, 2003; UNDP, 2000). Maslow (1943), in his *Theory of Human Motivation* explained self-actualization in line with terms such as personal growth, realizing one’s own potential, seeking peak experiences and having fulfillment in line with one’s own goals and values. Empowerment on the other hand has been related to having independence, being able to make decisions, having capability and control over one’s own affairs and self reliance (Oladipo, 2009). Rappaport (1987) defined empowerment as individuals, communities or organizations being in control of their own

affairs in terms of what is of importance to them. Psychological empowerment on the other hand has been defined as the mental state of an individual characterized by a sense of control, competence and perceived personal control (Oladipo, 2009).

#### **2.4.2 The Need for Psychosocial, Economic and Political Development in South Africa**

Authors such as Coovadia, Jewkes, Barron, Sanders and McIntyre (2009) are of the view that despite 17 years since the new democracy, the country is still battling with the transformation of society in terms of reducing poverty, unemployment and inequality. South Africa has been named the most unequal country in the world in terms of the inequalities between the richest and the poorest in the country, measured using the Gini Coefficient (Clark & Burnett, 2010).

Poverty, lack of access to resources, violence, diseases and crime are dominant features of South African society (Bourne, Lambert & Steyn, 2002). These problems occur most commonly among low-income communities, which are predominantly inhabited by black individuals in South Africa as a direct result of the apartheid regime, which was enforced through legislation by the National Party between 1948 and 1994 (Alexander, 2002).

The apartheid regime was an inhumane political system and a discriminatory policy that divided people according to race (Hargreaves, 1997). The different racial groups were controlled and exploited by the white minority (which comprised approximately 12.5% of the population), in a particularly violent and oppressive system (Hargreaves, 1997). Black, Indian and Colored individuals were denied basic human rights, their freedom was restricted, and they were denied access to economic, social and political opportunities (Hargreaves, 1997).

Although the apartheid system has been systematically dismantled since the African National Congress (ANC) came to power following the first democratic elections in 1994, social and economic inequality in South Africa remains high. The democratic government,



under the control of the ANC, developed the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). The aim of the programme was to eradicate the inequalities of the past, focusing on black communities in particular (Bourne et al., 2002).

However, despite the transition from apartheid many people continue to face numerous socio-economic problems according to Von Lieres (2007). These problems range from poverty and a lack of access to resources such as education, health care, employment and proper housing (Development Indicators, 2010). A life of poverty is associated with factors such as violence, diseases, trauma and crime (Williams, 2007).

According to Steyn, Badenhorst and Kamper (2010), many young people are trapped in the circle of poverty where there is a lack of exposure to opportunities that aid personal development. Many historically disadvantaged groups live in informal settlements where space is restricted and there are often extended families living in a small area, where clean water is limited if even available and children are often raised in surroundings where substance abuse is prevalent. Being brought up by a single parent is also a common occurrence (Steyn et al., 2010).

The divide between race, class and gender is still present in South Africa with respect to access to education, housing, employment and sport facilities (Clark & Burnett, 2010; Struthers, 2011). Struthers (2011) links poverty and inequality to the increasing incidents of crime and violence in South Africa and maintains that this has an effect on the social and political life of communities. He further draws attention to the fact that violent behavior and sexual assault is more common amongst disadvantaged communities in South Africa and children growing up in these households experience emotional trauma as a result of living in a violent home.

The education system among low-income communities in South Africa is characterized by high rates of violence and crime, a lack of access to proper education where

schools are overcrowded, poorly resourced, and teachers are often not equipped with appropriate skills (Bloch, 2009; Steyn et al., 2010). Struthers (2011) has indicated that according to a study done at Western Cape schools, there were reports of rape (25%), weapons taken to school (100%), drug abuse (90%) and assault (60%). According to Bloch (2009), school education in South Africa is of poor quality, not only the execution of the curriculum but also the design. The education system in South Africa, among the majority of the youth is unsatisfactory and the learners do not reach their full capabilities or attain necessary skills and qualifications for their own development (Fataar, 2010). Bloch (2009), further notes that education in South Africa emphasizes marginalization of poor people therefore enhancement of development is unlikely.

The limited opportunities available to the historically disadvantaged could possibly leave them without adequate skills for employment and could make it extremely difficult to escape the life of poverty they find themselves in thus impeding their personal development (Gaum, 2008). In addition, individuals living in low-income communities face economic, political, psychosocial and physical challenges. This view is supported by Marjoribanks and Mboya (1998) who discuss the self-concepts of young people, and how their environment can shape this. Factors such as poor housing conditions, the employment status of one's family and lack of basic resources can have a detrimental effect on how one perceives oneself.

The prevalence of these problems in South Africa supports the notion that there is an urgent need for psychosocial, economic and political development amongst marginalized groups of people who are suffering as a result of the inequalities of the past.

### **2.4.3 Rationale behind using Sport to Foster Development**

Given the need for development in South Africa discussed above, sport development programmes may offer a potential avenue for transformation aimed at marginalized youth groups. It has been proposed that sport can be used to promote development. In this context

‘development’ is sometimes taken to mean the development of athletic/sporting skills (as in when we start programmes aimed to produce better/more competitive sports people), sometimes it is taken to mean individual psychosocial development (as when individuals develop skills and are empowered), and sometimes it is taken to mean community development (as when the goals are economic, social and political development). This last kind of development (i.e. community development) is perhaps the most tricky one because it begs the question, ‘How does sport lead to economic, social and political development?’

Brunelle et al. (2007) is of the view that the sport context is conducive to adolescent development and notes that the view of sport as a tool for development is not a new phenomenon. He explains that because sport is so popular amongst adolescents, regardless of the values it may or may not produce, it would be functional to create opportunities for pro-social development within sport programmes. Hanson, Larson and Dworkin (2003) echo this idea by explaining that community programmes and extracurricular activities (such as sports programmes) may provide conditions and opportunities suited to nurturing development.

According to Sanders, Phillips and Vanreusel (2012), education is an important part of development. The United Nations (2003) view sport as an important tool in teaching life skills and encouraging positive values among the youth. Hanson et al. (2003) note that there is a relationship between lower school dropout rates, reduced problematic activities, positive adjustment and youth activities. Other authors such as Busseri and Rose-Krasnor (2009) have linked organized youth activities such as community clubs and sports teams to positive youth and adolescent development.

The National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (2002) have identified criteria needed for positive overall development among individuals. These include clear and consistent structure, supervision by an adult, support for efficiency, physical and

psychological safety, family, school and community efforts, positive social norms, opportunities to belong, and supportive relationships.

Brunelle et al. (2007) further notes that sport can be used to teach life lessons through structured sport activities. An example of this is a peer-led programme in Canada which uses two programmes namely *Going for the Goal (GOAL)* and *Sports United to Promote Education and Recreation (SUPER)*, that is an integrated sport and life skills programme focusing on three basic concepts (Brunelle et al., 2007). The three focus areas of the programme are: (1) teaching the physical skills necessary of a specific sport; (2) opportunities for practicing and mastering the physical skills; and (3) learning life skills that are related to sport and how these skills can be used in other environments. These life skills include but are not limited to goal setting, reaching goals, learning confidence and focus, learning to have dreams, positive self talk, developing a healthy lifestyle, management of emotions and learning relaxation (Brunelle et al., 2007).

Lawson (2005) notes that in order for sport development and exercise programmes to become worthwhile government investments they need to show how they contribute to empowerment and community development. These programmes need to be able to distinguish links between sport and exercise programmes and measurable outcomes.

Lawson, (2005) states that empowerment and community development have been important in different policies around the world. This includes environmental, economic, social welfare, criminal justice, and anti-terrorism and environmental protection policies. The author notes that sport and exercise programmes need to orientate their programmes towards empowerment and community development. The author further explains that sport programmes need to be strategically designed to contribute to community development. In other words, practices, programmes and policies need to be designed and delivered according

to the characteristics that contribute to sustainable and integrated social and economic development (Lawson, 2005). The author also informs us that there are five contributions to development that sport and exercise programmes should focus on in order to contribute toward empowerment and community development. These criteria include social networks; collective identities; environments that enhance health; programmes that improve wellbeing; and aiding human capital development. These contributions will be discussed in the section below.

Firstly Social Networks may be produced through sport programmes among participants and their families. Lawson (2005) and Putnam (1993) explain that social networks produce certain products that are vital to sustainable development therefore contributing to community development. These include cooperation, social trust, norms of reciprocity and collaboration.

Secondly, sport programmes may lead to collective identities being developed. Lawson (2005) describes the importance of local, place-based identities as they may bridge intergroup conflict and differences and facilitate collective action. He also notes that the development of identities may aid social solidarity and integration. Therefore sport and exercise programmes should be designed strategically to facilitate interactions between different people in order for identities to be developed.

Thirdly sport programmes may create environments that enhance or improve health. This is fundamental to development initiatives whereas health problems inhibit development initiatives (Lawson, 2005).

Sport and exercise programmes improve wellbeing. Wellbeing indicators include health, positive relationships, favorable environments which promote optimal development, social support networks among communities, and positive relationships among people from

diverse backgrounds, reducing social exclusion and isolation. The author notes that sport programmes will not achieve these outcomes alone but that the programmes should work in collaboration with others to improve development (Lawson, 2005).

Sport programmes may aid human capital development. This can be described as an economic concept vital in the workforce. In other words human capital consists of people having developed specific characteristics needed for employment related activities. This is important in economic, social and sustainable development. The characteristics include knowledge, skills, competence, attitudes and capacity for useful work related activities and citizenship. Lawson (2005) emphasizes that education is therefore important in the development of human capital considering its wide influence.

Sport has been used in the past to foster development. The United Nations (UN), through the Millennium Development Goals, has indicated that sport can be used to further development (Levermore, 2008). The International Labor Organization (ILO) created a programme to strengthen skills for employment through sport. The ILO holds the view that skills attained through sport such as leadership and teamwork can be transferred to other areas of life such as in the employment sector. It is therefore suggested by Levermore (2008) that sport programmes can be useful tools in teaching people skills needed for employment.

Hargreaves (1997) notes that black communities are generally target groups for development in order to address the inequalities of the past. She further argues that sport in South Africa is deemed as critical for nation building. Malebo et al., (2007) support this view by explaining that on a combined level, sport leads to connectedness, shared sense of identity and a feeling of belonging, which are components of nation building.

Hargreaves (1997) further notes, in terms of separation as a result of apartheid, that sport can be used to unite people. Sport development is important in South Africa specifically among disadvantaged communities. Many people including sporting officials and politicians view sport as a means to improve nationhood and overcome racial barriers and class divisions (Padayachee, Desai & Vhed, 2004). Kruger and Pienaar (2011) are of the view that disadvantaged communities, who have lack of access to opportunities for sport need to constantly be supported otherwise potentially capable athletes could possibly not be discovered. This would have a negative effect on the quality of sport in South Africa as well as the transformation of sport (Kruger and Pienaar, 2011).

One of the advantages of sport highlighted in the literature is its competitive aspect and the value of self-discipline and self-efficiency that is learnt through participating in different types of sporting activities. This is confirmed by authors who list the benefits of sport involvement such as the ability to set goals, solve problems and work together in a group. Through sport, these qualities can be enhanced and applied in other areas of life including educational settings and the work place (Blinde & Taub, 1999; Clark & Burnett, 2010; Greenwood, Dzewaltowski & French, 1990).

Mansuri and Rao (2003) define capacity building as promoting an individual's ability to make decisions, enhancing their problem solving skills, and improving their ability to set and achieve goals. Their research suggests that capacity building of this nature equips people with skills necessary for employment. It is further argued that participation in sport can contribute to this kind of capacity building.

Community development programmes are one avenue through which South Africa can seek to alleviate social problems. Community development has been defined as a form of "social planning", which can be used as a mechanism for transformation (RSA, 1996; Spruil, Kenney & Kaplan, 2001, p. 105).

As noted previously in this chapter, involvement in sport can be linked to certain developmental outcomes such as accomplishment of one's goals, improved academic performance, solving problems and control of one's emotions (Holt et al., 2011). These developmental signs have also been used to describe capacity building by the UNDP (2000). For the United Nations (UNDP, 2000), capacity building is an important outcome of sport development.

It can be argued that capacity building at community level has the potential to eventually lead to nation building because it will not only equip people with skills but it will build a nation of people who have gained skills through involvement in sport. Likewise, sport development programmes could possibly be used in communities to build the capacity of the people and thus contribute to development and nation building.

An area where sport can be used to contribute to development and ultimately lead to building the capacity of people is among the youth or adolescents in schools. The Positive Youth Development paradigm, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter three, sees the youth and adolescents as capable individuals who can engage with their communities and who are able to solve problems (Ersing, 2008). Struthers (2011) explains that sport can be used in schools in a number of ways. Sport can be used as a mechanism to overcome cultural barriers and to contribute to social integration; sport programmes involve physical contact and can be points of collective experience, this could possibly build cohesion; sport could also surpass class divisions; the norms and rules of sport can be used as a cultural instrument to lessen group divisions; and sport can be used internationally for peace building initiatives and can possibly be used as a tool for addressing conflict (Struthers. 2011).

Authors such as Giulianotti (2011) explain how the 'Sport for Development' sector uses sport as a tool for development. This refers to the reconstruction and reconciliation



among areas where conflict has previously occurred. This sector explains how sport can be used to address problems such as social exclusion, crime, gender inequality and to promote education regarding health.

Struthers (2011) further notes that sport brings about a message of non-violence. Children's involvement in sport leads to communities being developed and mobilized because it has an influence on confidence, understanding differences and acceptance amongst groups. Sport governing bodies (Giulianotti, 2011) such as the International Olympic Committee claim that sport events encourage peace and tolerance among people, including supporters and participants.

Darnell (2007) discusses sport in terms of how it is viewed from a first world perspective. The author notes that not only is sport viewed as a human right but it is also seen as a means through which positive transformation can occur among disparate groups and differences between nations and cultures. Levermore (2008) also supports the view of sport being used to unite disparate groups.

Coalter (2010) notes that even though sport can have a positive influence on individuals it is not the only solution to social problems. He further notes that in order for sport to aid development and education, the correct conditions need to be in place. He explains that sport for development programmes have limited focused interventions aiming to solve broad problems. Sport is therefore not the only solution to development problems.

Brunelle et al. (2007) suggests that in order for sport to lead to the development of pro-social values, research regarding the development of values should be an integral part of the structure of a sport programme. The programme should meet a certain criteria according to research regarding pro-social development. According to Weiss (2008), one must adopt and integrate theory and research from specific perspectives in order to maximize the benefits

of participation in youth sport. Weiss (2008) suggests that these perspectives include that of public health, psychology, developmental sport psychology, kinesiology, child and adolescent psychology and educational psychology.

Weiss (1995) notes that it is often difficult to adhere to the needed criteria for positive development and for this reason activities need to be purposefully structured and taught according to specified criteria. Lawson (2005) explains that sport and exercise programmes have the potential to contribute to sustainability, economic and community development but they fail to do so as they are not strategically aimed and deliberately structured to achieve these goals. Brunelle et al. (2007) also comments that simply playing sport is not going to automatically lead to factors enabling or enhancing development. He explains that research needs to be conducted to identify the criteria needed for a positive development setting. Sport programmes therefore need to be structured in a specific way if they are going to lead to development (Brunelle et al., 2007).

#### **2.4.4 Criteria for Sport Development Programmes to be Effective**

Lawson (2005) has indicated that sport can be used as a tool for sustainable and community development under certain conditions. These conditions are that the programme needs to be structured towards enhancing empowerment, community and sustainable development. Brunelle et al. (2007) further notes that in order for pro-social values to be developed among adolescents, sport programmes should be structured and taught in line with the characteristics needed for positive development. Table 2.1 shows how a sport programme can be structured to lead towards empowerment, community and sustainable development (Lawson, 2005).

**Table 2.1 Structuring of a Sport Development Programme, (Lawson, 2005)**

<b>Characteristics needed in a Sport Programme for Sustainable and Integrated Social and Economic Development</b>		
<b>Contributions</b>	<b>Example in a Sport Programme</b>	<b>Possible outcome</b>
<i>Reinforce Social Networks</i>	<i>Involving family members, friends and peers in the sport programme such as encouraging them to watch competitions.</i>	<i>Social trust, norms of reciprocity, collaboration, cooperation and coordination.</i>
<i>Development of Collective Identities</i>	<i>The programme could facilitate face-to-face interactions enabling outsiders and friends to become friends.</i>	<i>Facilitate social integration and solidarity, enable collective action and bridge intergroup differences.</i>
<i>Create Health Enhancing Environments</i>	<i>Educate on negative and positive health behaviors and the effects of both behaviors.</i>	<i>A health-enhancing environment could encourage positive health behaviors rather than negative health behaviors, which lead to sickness and diseases.</i>

<i>Reinforce the Development of Wellbeing</i>	<i>Provide a setting and an environment that reinforces caring relationships, relationships among diverse people, social support, opportunities for self worth, efficiency, identity development and meaningful engagement.</i>	<i>An environment, which focuses on wellbeing indicators, could improve wellbeing of individuals.</i>
<i>Human Capital Development</i>	<i>Workforce characteristics such as knowledge, competence, skills, health and wellbeing need to be focused on. These are developed through education. The programme will need to give support and assistance such as an afterschool programme focusing on the development and importance of these characteristics.</i>	<i>This can equip people with skills necessary for employment.</i>

### 2.4.5 Examples of Sport Development Programmes

The United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have developed partnerships with community-based organizations, non-profit organizations and private interest groups to encourage participation in sport (Levermore, 2008). There is a database on the website [www.sportanddev.org](http://www.sportanddev.org) which lists development programmes all over the world that use sport as a tool to reach humanitarian or development objectives. There are currently 192 projects listed on International platform on sport and development (n.d). Table 2.2 gives some examples of the sport development projects listed on the database.

**Table 2.2 Sport Development Projects listed on [www.sportanddev.org](http://www.sportanddev.org)**

<b>Sport Development Projects listed on <a href="http://www.sportfordev.org">www.sportfordev.org</a></b>	
<b>Name and Location of Project</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
<i>Vencedoras situated in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil</i>	<i>This programme is specific to girls and focuses on economic empowerment programmes through football. They help at risk youth in Latin America and combine football based field activities with classroom activities. The objective of the programme is to provide youth with skills needed to successfully enter the competitive job market using football to help them transfer sport skills into employability skills.</i>

<i>Soccer for Success situated in the United States of America</i>	<i>This programme is the United States Soccer Foundation's innovative youth development programme that uses soccer as a tool to combat childhood obesity and promote healthy lifestyles for children in low-income urban communities. The foundation partners with community based organizations across the country to operate Soccer for Success sites to provide thousands of children with free after school programming three times per week.</i>
<i>Never Give Up situated in Zambia, Africa</i>	<i>This programme associates educational empowerment with a social, mental and physical development of vulnerable children and youth through organized sport and recreational activities. The link between sports activities and education aims to engage and prepare the most disadvantaged children and dropouts for more formal education by means of training and basic life skills.</i>

#### 2.4.6 The lack of Evidence to Support the use of ‘Sport for Development’ Programmes

According to Pringle (2009), using activities such as drama, dance and music, as a mechanism to engage people in services, is not new in mental health research. Research regarding sport on the other hand, as a vehicle for mental health interventions, is not widely available. According to Hanson et al. (2003), the specific processes happening within youth activities have not been widely researched. These activities have been treated as a “black box” in the form of not looking at the specific processes within the individual that result in positive changes (p. 26).

We are reminded by scholars such as Petitpas et al. (2008) of the importance of monitoring youth development programmes. This is to ensure that the required goals and targets are being met and that the effectiveness of the programme is continually monitored and evaluated. This ensures identification of the mechanisms that lead to the positive impact of a programme and that appropriate resources are assigned for this purpose.

Equally there is a lack of theory to explain how exactly sport leads to development. One exception is the Positive Youth Development (PYD) framework that is sometimes used to understand the process of using sport as a context for development. This framework will be described and critiqued in Chapter three.

Nicholls, Giles and Sethna (2010) propose that there is a lack of scientific evidence and a lack of proof that validates the sport for development phenomenon. They further explain that research among certain groups like women, blacks and young people will contribute to scientific knowledge in this field.

According to the United Nations, it is of importance to focus on gathering more evidence and social scientific research with regards to the benefits of sport and how it can lead to development and peace (Levermore, 2010; United Nations, 2003). This view is supported by the Sport for Development International Working Group (Levermore, 2010) who report that it is of importance to add to current evidence with regards to the effectiveness of sport to act as a vehicle for development.

Theories need to be developed within this area to measure the impact and outcome of sport development programmes. It is important to understand the view of people participating in a sport development programme rather than those developing the programme. This will give insight into the mechanism through which change can occur and the lived experience of

the recipients. This could enable future researchers to understand the impact of the programme on the people participating in it.

## **2.5 The De-idealization of Sport**

The discussion above highlights the potential advantages of sport and how it may be used as a vehicle for development. However, there have been a number of reports of the potential negative impacts of sport and sport development programmes. A study conducted by Hoglund and Sundberg (2008) in South Africa, indicated that sport programmes could have a negative effect on intergroup relations because they create and reinforce divisions between groups. They further note that when conflict occurs amongst sport groups it can influence the development of stereotypes of the sports groups. The authors highlight the fact that sport programmes in underdeveloped communities are often difficult to maintain due to lack of resources. Coalter (2007) as well as Long and Sanderson (2001) have critiqued sport programmes as being the solution to society's problems. These authors claim that there is a lack of evidence supporting the view that sport programmes will lead to positive social change in communities. Not only do we need to adopt a critical stance to the idea that sport can be the solution to social problems, but we also need to be open to the idea that sport as a social institution can do harm and work against positive development. This idea is explored in the subsections that follow which discuss how sport can be used as a mechanism of control which marginalizes individuals, as a performance of 'whiteness' which privileges certain groups of individuals, and as a way of policing gender boundaries thus acting to support hegemonic masculinity.



### **2.5.1 Sport as a Mechanism for Social Control**

The use of sport as a vehicle for development and social transformation needs to be undertaken cautiously. Although sport is often idealized as a healthy and desirable pursuit it is not without its own political dynamics and inherent value system. Messner (1991) notes that sport is a social institution. He further notes that the structure and values of sport have always been closely related with social values, conflicts between groups and nations, and power relations. Collins (2007) argues that sport can be seen as a mechanism to control the working classes and to be the exclusive domain of the upper classes.

Research has indicated that sport has previously been used by ruling groups to maintain control over people. An example of this is the practice in the early twentieth century whereby sport was deliberately introduced into English public schools as a way to initiate boys into a particular social order and teach them qualities such as leadership, self-reliance, loyalty, initiative and obedience. The British saw participation in sport as a way to show masculinity and dominance over others, particularly over colonized people or black individuals (Messner, 1991). The British upper classes actually extended sports among the middle classes in the hope that they would also adopt the values and ethics of the upper classes leading to steady colonial control.

Sport has however shown differences between class and race. Messner (1991) makes a point that the structure and values of sport are largely shaped by those who hold power. For example, during apartheid in South Africa, sport was divided among races – races were divided and practiced sport separately. The ruling apartheid government, the National Party, granted access of sport resources to white people and black individuals were not allowed to participate with white teams or at white events (Padayachee et al., 2004). Van der Merwe (2010) further highlights the fact that, in terms of athletics in post apartheid South Africa, the selective support of athletes, as a result of a lack of state structures, perpetuates the unequal

relations at community level as well as serving as a form of social control. The lack of transformation in sport remains problematic as a result of this discrimination. Despite numerous measures put in place by the new government, sport remains dominated by the white population group. Thus, the social control practices of the past continue to play a role in sport throughout South Africa as transformation efforts have only led to negligible integration. This implies that social control remains in the hands of the minority with the majority of citizens being placed in a fairly powerless situation.

### **2.5.2 Sport as the Performance of Gender**

Sport has been viewed as not only dividing race and class but also dividing the different genders. In the 1960's it was widely believed that one must be involved in sport in order to be masculine (Sabo & Runfola, 1980). Politicians even applauded sport for encouraging men to be more courageous and have strength to protect their nation. By the 1970's feminists began to criticize the prohibition of women in participation in sport (Messner, 1991).

By 1980, the analysis of sport by feminists went further than criticizing the exclusion of females in sport. The function of sport was seen as a way to teach boys values such as superiority, success and competition and provide them with skills needed in the adult world. Other authors, (Sabo & Runfola, 1980) argued that this was also a way to have domination over women. Many feminists thus view sport as an institution that joins men in having control over women (Messner, 1991).

### **2.5.3 Exclusion from Opportunities to Participate in Sport: Sport, Race and the current Political Situation in South Africa**

In spite of the potential advantages of sport, many people are marginalized from opportunities to participate. This is true particularly in South Africa because of the history of apartheid which saw groups of individuals denied opportunities to participate and resulted in an uneven distribution of resources (such as sports facilities). Consequently many South Africans (including those from low-income communities and disabled individuals) do not have access to opportunities to participate. This is a human rights issue and organizations like the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have affirmed that the right to participate in sport and exercise and opportunities to play, are a right for all (Sport for Development and Peace, n.d; World Health Organization, 2007). This in itself is an argument for sport development programmes that simply promote participation among marginalized groups.

Sanders et al. (2012) highlight the fact that sport declined during the apartheid era. This resulted in a lack of access to resources and opportunities to participate in sport. Many people were therefore not able to participate (Coalter, 2010; Sanders et al., 2012). Sport was divided among different classes and racial lines during apartheid but it is still an important component in South African culture (Coalter, 2010; Padayachee et al., 2004).

According to Van der Merwe (2010), since the 1950's, the policies regarding race and sport were formalized. These involved laws against inter racial sports teams and black sports teams were banned from competing against white sports teams. Consequently South Africa was banned from competing in the Olympic Games for more than 30 years. South Africans were only allowed to compete again in the 1992 Barcelona Olympics.

Sport among white communities in South Africa, during apartheid, was a presentation of racial superiority particularly among the Afrikaans speaking men. White male sports clubs were supported by municipal funds. There were very few resources available for the other racial groups and if they were, it was only amongst men (Grundlingh, 1995).

Since 1994, or post apartheid, sport, which is part of South Africa's culture, has been seen as a way to overcome the boundaries between different classes and races and to bring people or groups of people together (Padayachee et al., 2004). Even though the laws have changed since apartheid, transformation is still happening at a slow pace and resources are more available in the private schools and ex-model C schools (which continue to be dominated by white learners) compared to schools in low-income communities (which continue to be dominated by black learners) (Van der Merwe, 2010).

Darnell (2007) introduces Critical Race Theory and raises a theme in the literature that provides insight into the topic of sport and development. The author explains that on an international level there are two broad frameworks that deal with sport and development. He explains that the one framework views sport as an integrative social practice and the other framework relating to sport and development views the practice as the "benevolent deliverance of aid, good or expertise" from the developed First World nations to the developing nations of the Third World (Darnell, 2007, p. 561).

Darnell (2007) goes further and refers to authors such as Alcoff (2001) and Goldberg (2002) to illustrate that the benevolent framework of sport for development practices can also be seen as a reconstruction of past colonial practices where people from a superior position provide a service to marginalized groups of people. Alcoff (2001) notes that we have to remember that practices of the past where the superior groups of people dictate to marginalized groups of people are still occurring today. Levermore (2008) also comments that during colonialism, sport was seen as being able to modernize society or improve

nations. In this sense sport is sometimes a performance of whiteness (Darnell, 2007; Long & Hylton, 2010; Sterkenburg & Knoppers, 2004).

One could examine this view of Critical Race Theory and compare it to sport for development programmes in South Africa. Even though these programmes are aimed at promoting development among historically disadvantaged and marginalized groups in poor communities, they are reflective of the practices of the past where the economically empowered group continues to dictate to the marginalized economically disempowered groups of people. Some may see sport for development programmes as potentially negative because it resembles a form of neo-colonialism and hence as an enactment of old practices in a new guise.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

Participation in sport has the potential to precipitate many benefits including physical (health), mental health and psychological benefits, skills development, values and attitudes. The need for development in South Africa has been identified as well as the rationale behind using sport as a means to achieve development. The literature has provided evidence to suggest that through sport, individuals become healthier. This works against illness and disability and hence makes them more productive. This means that they can work harder or longer and contribute more to the economy and accumulate personal wealth. Sport could thus have the potential to contribute to economic development. In terms of psychological and mental health benefits, the literature has indicated that sport leads to individuals becoming empowered. This results in individuals being able to exercise more agency and take control of their lives and their surroundings. Thus this empowerment has the potential to translate into social change as individuals try to make their circumstances better. Through sport, individuals can also learn skills and values (such as goal setting, problem

solving, team work and perseverance), according to the literature, that can transfer to other areas of their lives and make them better at managing personal relationships and becoming more employable. One can assume that if marginalized individuals become more employable this can contribute to economic development because there is a reduction in poverty and unemployment. Through involvement in sport, people also become more connected. Barriers are broken down, relationships are built, peace is promoted and national identity is created. This creates a sense of belonging and inter-connectedness, which enables social change and social mobilization.

From the literature reviewed above it is apparent that sport has numerous potential benefits and (under certain conditions) can lead to psychological wellbeing among people. It would seem that sport development programmes might have the potential to promote psychosocial, economic and political development if designed and executed correctly. Even though sport development programmes are not the only solution to the problems in society, it would seem that they could lead to positive social change in South Africa but the research regarding this topic, and research regarding the actual processes leading to this change is limited. Consequently research in this area is of great importance for the design of future sport programmes aimed at development.

Even though these positive results are evident there are also negative aspects of sport including its use as a mechanism for social control, dividing race and as the performance of gender. Sport in South Africa is also seen as a political construct as a result of the laws enforced during the apartheid era as well as the continuing effect of this in post apartheid South Africa. With this in mind sport needs to be employed cautiously and critically as a means of promoting development.

The literature reviewed above suggests that sport under certain conditions may have the potential to be used to enhance the development of individuals and groups. It is however, not exactly clear how individuals are affected by participation in sport development programmes or how the benefits to individuals accrue to communities. This study therefore examines the impact that a sport development programme has on a group of individuals to investigate this concept in more detail. Conclusions from the study will be drawn to critically examine the possible effect of sport development programmes and how they can be developed to benefit groups of people.

## CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 3.1 Introduction

As noted in Chapter two, research in the field of Sport-for-Development is characterized by a lack of theory. This makes it difficult to propose a theoretical framework for this study. Much of the work in this area has been conceptualized within the Positive Youth Development (PYD) paradigm. The PYD model is helpful in so far as it focuses attention on the potential measurable outcomes of sport development programmes and it highlights the necessary conditions under which sport can be a context for development. I describe this model below and propose to use it as an initial lens through which to analyze my data in the hopes of making explicit what the participants in this study identify as the outcomes of their engagement in the Academy and what they perceive to have been the characteristics of the Academy which enabled their development. The PYD model is, however, limited in so far as it is ostensibly focused on observable individual changes and the micro-context (i.e. the structure and content of the sport development programme), which enables this development, thus largely ignoring the broader macro-environmental context. Furthermore the PYD model does not provide insight into the mechanisms of how individual development and change occurs as a result of sport.

Given that the PYD model fails to articulate how sport for development programmes might result in broader macro-environmental changes, I am proposing to also use Bronfenbrenner's Eco-Systems theory as an alternative lens through which to analyze my data. This theory is described below and potentially offers a framework for understanding how sport development programmes interact with social, economic, political and historic factors.

Although the PYD framework helps to make explicit the conditions necessary for sport programmes to precipitate development, the model does not pay particular attention to



the importance of the relationship between the athlete and the coach, and how this might act as a facilitator or barrier to individual development. The data I collected for this study, suggests strongly that this relationship is an important contributor to the impact of sport-for-development programmes. For this reason I propose to explore the significance of this relationship for the participants in this study as a third lens through which to interpret my data. This chapter thus concludes with a discussion of the literature on the Athlete-Coach relationship.

### **3.2 The Positive Youth Development Model**

Positive Youth Development (PYD) can be defined as strategies deliberately undertaken through structured youth activities (such as sport) to promote “engagement in pro-social behaviors and avoidance of health compromising behaviors and future jeopardizing behaviors” (Roth, Brooks-Gunn, Murray & Foster, 1998, p. 426). Instead of focusing on the prevention of problems, the PYD approach focuses on fostering positive outcomes (Olsen & Goddard, 2012). There have been a number of different versions of the Positive Youth Development (PYD) model since the 1990’s. This includes the 5Cs model (discussed below) and the Developmental Asset model. Both of these models have common features including building strengths, competencies and positive skills among young people.

The 5Cs model explains that PYD is the “Culmination of the Cs, whereby higher scores on each of the Cs contributes to a resultant higher score for PYD” (Jones, Dunn, Holt, Sullivan & Bloom, 2011, p. 250). The 5Cs refer to competence, confidence, connection, character and caring which are described in table 3.1 below (Lerner et al., 2005). Jones et al. (2011) explain that the 5Cs have been recognized as one of the most important frameworks for evaluating PYD in sport. Thus much of the sport for development evaluation and research has focused on empirically measuring changes in these dimensions brought about through participation in sports programmes.

**Table 3.1 The 5Cs Model**

<b>The 5Cs</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Competence	A positive view of one's activities in certain areas including social (interpersonal skills/conflict resolution), academic (attendance/grades), vocational (career choices/working habits) and cognitive (decision making).
Confidence	Internal feeling or belief of self worth, self-efficacy or global self-regard.
Connection	Positive relationships between family, peers or people in the community.
Character	Sense of morality or integrity (what is right or wrong), respect for cultural values and social standards. Being able to act according to standards for correct behaviors.
Caring	Empathy, sympathy and compassion for others.

Ersing (2008) notes that the PYD perspective moves away from viewing youth as problems that need to be solved but rather leans towards viewing the youth as capable, problem solvers, a new generation, striving to achieve full potential, and ready to engage within their communities. Within this approach, young people are seen as resilient and flexible. This approach is of the view that it is possible for young individuals to move from adverse situations towards positive lifestyles if given the necessary resources and support to do so. This is consistent with the paradigm of humanism, which views individuals as being able to solve their own problems. Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow had a great influence on humanistic psychology (Jenkins, 1985). Rogers (1983) believed that individuals have the ability to take responsibility for their own life and achieve self-direction. Self-direction according to Rogers (1983) refers to an individual being able to view his or her situation and take control of it, in other words the individual is responsible. Rogers (1983) also believed that individuals can be self-actualized and the way in which they are socialized has an effect on this. Maslow on the other hand described self-actualization as one of the levels of human growth. He believed that an individuals' potential could be fully realized if he or she reaches self-actualization (Maslow, 1970). Similarly PYD believes that if young people are provided with suitable opportunities and experiences, their inherent capabilities and capacities will be realized.

The PYD paradigm places emphasis on the competencies and strengths of young people rather than focusing on them as being risks. The youth are considered as a resource to be nurtured. The PYD paradigm has the view that through organized sport, adolescents can be connected with peers, adults, family members within schools and other settings through supportive relationships. Organized sport thus provides a context or environment in which young people can discover their capabilities and inherent potential (Jones et al., 2011). Jones et al. (2011) explain that the 5Cs have been recognized as one of the most important

frameworks for evaluating PYD in sport. Jones et al. (2011) explain that sport provides a context through which PYD can take place. This can be done through learning values, life skills and positive health behaviors through participation in sport.

While the PYD model is inherently optimistic and provides a framework for evaluating and measuring the impact of sport for development programmes it is not without its theoretical shortcomings as a way of conceptualizing sport for development programmes. Firstly, the PYD model fails to explain how individuals change through these experiences taking place within a positive youth setting (i.e. a sport programme). The model assumes that if you provide the right conditions to young people they spontaneously grow. It thus sees individuals as a kind of “black box” (the internal workings of which are unknown) (Hanson et al., 2003, p. 26). Similarly the PYD model does not explain how individual development may contribute to broader socio-economic development. As such one of the critiques of this model is that it is too individually focused and does not make room for the possibility that sometimes individuals are restricted because of macro environmental factors and their socio-economic context. It seems to me that there are two potentially limiting assumptions of PYD: (1) there seems to be an explicit assumption that providing the right experiences will lead individuals to grow regardless of the conditions under which they live; and (2) there seems to be an implicit assumption that if individuals are developed there will automatically be benefits to the broader community.

The PYD framework will be used in this study as a lens to analyze the findings of this study (i.e. what the ingredients of the programme are and how the individuals perceived their change). However because the model fails to take account of context I will also employ Bronfenbrenner’s Eco-Systems theory to acknowledge that individuals live within a broader context.

### 3.3 Bronfenbrenner's Eco-Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner, a child developmental theorist, proposed an Eco-Systems theory to explain how individual development occurs within the context of an inter-related network of factors. These factors include social, cultural, economic and political variables. As such his model describes how individual development is shaped by (and in turn shapes) the context in which the individuals find themselves. Although the model was initially proposed to explain child development it has been taken up in the field of Community Psychology as a way of conceptualizing psychological interventions in community settings.

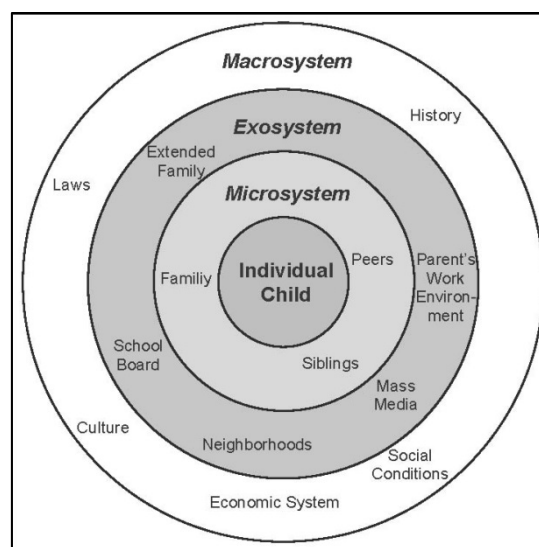
Bronfenbrenner draws attention to the fact that children's development is shaped by a host of factors and the broader context within which they grow up. The child must always be seen in relation to the context in which they are developing. This approach combines Ecological and Systems theories and aims to illustrate how the different levels of a particular social context are linked in dynamic, interacting, and interdependent relationships. Ecological theory looks at the way in which a person develops in relation to the physical environment in which they are growing up. We cannot be separated from our environment and everything has a context (Visser, 2007). Systems theory allows one to understand development, community processes and change within social systems (Visser, 2007). The assumptions of the theory need to be considered in order to provide a framework for understanding communities and planning interventions. Systems theory holds the view that a system consists of different subsystems that are connected in a reciprocal way and are thus interdependent. Visser (2007) notes that changes within a system, or rather within a subsystem, influence the system as a whole.

Spruil et al. (2001) define a community in terms of a complex living system where the elements of the system are individual people. The purpose of a systems approach is to understand elements of a system and the interactions between these systems. These authors

note that a central component of effective community development is to understand the complex systems that function within the community. As Systems theory proposes that different levels and groupings function interdependently, this implies that the whole is reliant upon the interaction of the different parts.

Bronfenbrenner, as part of his Eco-Systems theory, describes the different levels within a community and how development can occur. Development takes place within an environment through the interaction between different subsystems.

These levels within the community have an effect on individual behavior. These levels include the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem. Bronfenbrenner's Eco-Systems Model can be seen in Figure 3.1.



**3.1 Bronfenbrenner's Eco-Systems Model**

The microsystem of an individual is his or her immediate environment. This can include the family, workplace, school, sports group or peer group of an individual. This system refers to the interpersonal relationships, social roles and events being experienced in the immediate environment of the individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Visser, 2007). Certain processes take place within the microsystem that can have an effect on the development of an

individual. The structure or content of the microsystem can determine whether or not development can be produced or sustained (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Visser, 2007).

The mesosystem refers to the connections between microsystems. It includes the processes between the different microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Visser, 2007). In other words, it consists of the links between two or more settings of the individual. Bronfenbrenner proposes that development can occur if the connections between microsystems are strongly linked (Visser, 2007). He uses an example of a child learning values at school, which would represent one microsystem, and learning values at home, representing another microsystem. He explains that development can be enhanced if the values are the same.

The exosystem, which can also be referred to as the organizational level, consists of the processes or links between two or more settings, where one of these settings does not directly have an influence on the individual. In other words, this system consists of factors in the environment which have an effect on the individual but with which the individual has no direct contact (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Visser, 2007). Examples of the exosystem of individuals in a community can refer to the family social networks, neighborhood community contexts and the workplace of the parents (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Cochran, Larner, Gunnarsson & Henderson, 1990; Eckenrode & Gore, 1990; Pence, 1988).

The macrosystem refers to the organizations of social institutions common to a particular class, culture, ethnic group or attitudes that govern the behavior of an individual. It is the predominant pattern of the characteristics of the micro-, meso-, and exosystems. This can have an effect on the way a person lives (Bronfenbrenner, 1976). Bronfenbrenner expresses that the macrosystem can be thought of as the “societal blueprint for a particular culture or subculture” (Bronfenbrenner, 1994, p. 40).

The chronosystem refers to the change that occurs in an individuals' life over time as this can have an effect on their development. This can include factors such as family structure, financial status or employment status (Bronfenbrenner, 2004).

The benefit of conceptualizing sport for development programmes within Bronfenbrenner's Eco-Systems model is that it acknowledges that the recipients of sport development programmes exist within a network of contextual factors from which they cannot be separated. This model prompts us to think about how individual development might translate into changes within other systems. However the model also acknowledges that sport for development programmes are limited in the kind of development they can achieve since they do not necessarily lead to changes within the macrosystem.

### **3.4 The Athlete-Coach Relationship**

The PYD framework highlights what potential changes might take place within a youth sport development programme. However, it fails to explain how this change occurs. Some of this change may possibly be a result of the influence of the coach on the athlete. The power of this relationship is not well documented in the PYD literature (maybe because it is too difficult to measure) but it seems from my data that this is an important element of the participants in this study's experience of sport for development programmes. It will therefore be presented here and be used as a third lens through which to view the research data.

There is a body of literature, which describes the power of the Athlete-Coach relationship in influencing the athletes' level of accomplishment and their experience of participation in sport. Many adolescents and young people spend a large portion of their time involved in sports. A positive relationship between the athlete and the coach has been linked to positive changes such as the development of character, technical competencies, psychological abilities and physical abilities (Jackson, Grove & Beauchamp, 2010). Jowett and Cockerill (2003) further note that the relationship between the athlete and the coach is



essential during coaching as it is likely to determine the performance accomplishments, self esteem and satisfaction of the athlete. Enjoyment in sport and a lower dropout rate in sport have been linked to positive relationships with coaches (Jackson et al., 2010).

In a study conducted among Olympic medalists on their views on the Athlete-Coach relationship, one athlete reported that the relationship between the athlete and the coach was supportive and the coach was viewed somewhat like a father figure. Another athlete explained that her experience was like a father daughter relationship and that it was underlined by an understanding between her and her coach (Jowett & Cockerill, 2003).

Jowett and Cockerill (2003) also note that the relationship between the athlete and the coach goes further than instructing and teaching of techniques, skills and tactics. The relationship is also based on trust and honesty. The author further notes that caring on the part of the coach is vital in the Athlete-Coach relationship.

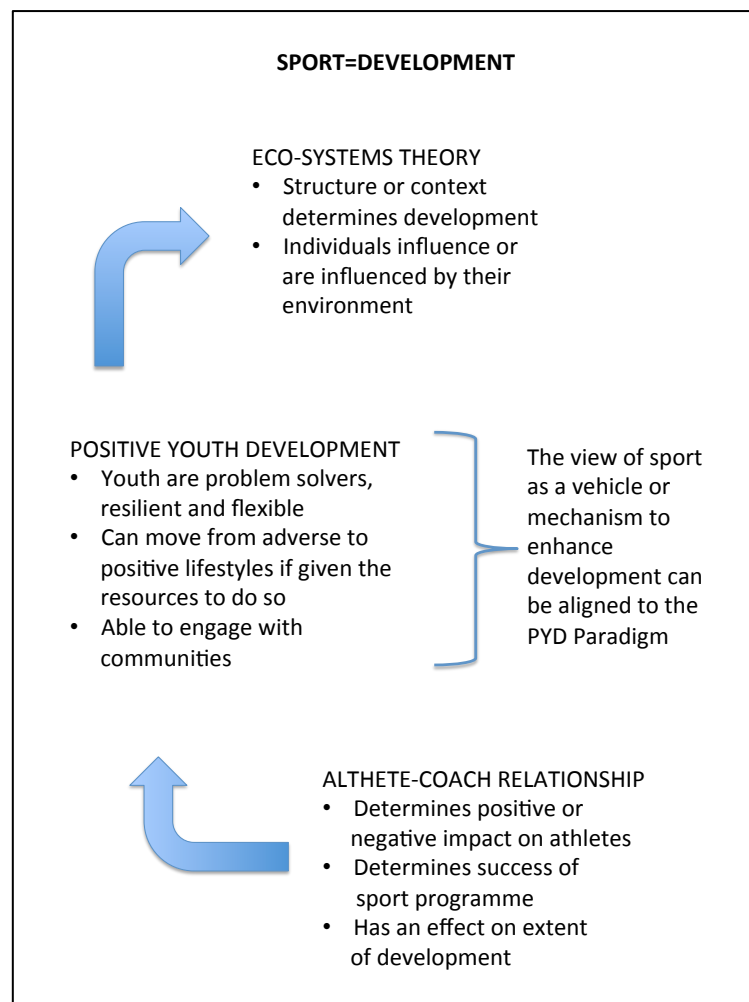
There is however evidence that suggests that the athlete can become distracted or stressed as a result of the relationship. Issues such as lack of respect, trust, support and communication can have a negative impact on the athlete (Jowett & Cockerill, 2003). It has also been noted that the coach provides skills or abilities that the athlete needs to adopt or apply for optimal performance. If the coach does not possess them then the athlete may be influenced negatively (Jowett & Cockerill, 2003). One could presume that this relationship between the coach and the athlete would get stronger over time and has the possibility to lead to some forms of dependency.

The feedback of a coach towards an athlete after a sporting success or failure is important as it shapes the way the athlete internalizes it. Communication types that are used between the coach and the athlete is important as it has an impact on a number of aspects including how athletes prepare, how they perform and how they make sense of failures or successes (Kassing & Anderson, 2013).

This relationship is important and the extent to which sport programmes lead to development could largely be reliant on this relationship, as well as the positive occurrences taking place between the athlete and his or her coach.

### 3.5 Integrated Model of Positive Youth Development Paradigm, Eco-Systems Theory and the Athlete-Coach Relationship

This section of the dissertation will link the Positive Youth Development paradigm, Eco-Systems theory and the Athlete-Coach relationship to the literature and to the subject of the potential for sport to be used as a vehicle or mechanism for development (See Figure 3.2).



### 3.2 Integrated Model of Positive Youth Development Paradigm, Eco-Systems Theory and the Athlete-Coach Relationship

The literature has shown that participation in sport has the potential to lead to many positive outcomes for individuals. These include accomplishment of one's goals, improved skills in social situations, health benefits, and problem solving skills (Wankel, 1993). Malebo et al. (2007) links participation in sport with psychological wellbeing which includes improved mood, optimism, meaningfulness in life, competence and confidence, establishing a shared sense of identity, feeling of belonging and connectedness. Other factors related to participation in sport include personal empowerment, high self esteem, coping mechanisms, self-assertiveness, cooperativeness, perseverance, and motivation towards achievement (Blinde & Taub, 1999; Smith and Smoll, 1997). The literature has also indicated that the skills learnt through sport can be used in other areas of an individual's life (Blinde & Taub, 1999; Clark & Burnett, 2010; Greenwood et al., 1990).

From the view of the PYD paradigm, the youth are problem solvers, capable, resilient and flexible individuals. They are able to move from adverse conditions to positive lifestyles if given the resources to do so. Young individuals are also able to engage with their communities (Ersing, 2008; Jones et al., 2011). The view that sport can be used as a mechanism to enhance development can be aligned with these views. If individuals are involved in sport development programmes then they could benefit from the positive outcomes of sport. One can assume that individuals in South Africa who have suffered as a result of the apartheid regime (perhaps not directly but rather born into a family who did suffer directly), will be able to move from the adverse social conditions (living in an informal settlement characterized by lack of access to resources and high rates of poverty, crime and unemployment) towards positive lifestyles if given the resources, through participation in sport, to do so. The individuals who have been developed through sport could also interact and engage with other members of their community.

The PYD paradigm helps us to understand how sport could impact on development at the individual level. The literature on sport explains how sport increases communication, conflict resolution, social integration and health promotion (Wann, 2006). The PYD paradigm further explains how development occurs within what Bronfenbrenner terms the microsystem.

At the individual level sport has a positive impact in a number of ways, according to the literature. This ranges from feelings of belonging, health benefits, self-assertiveness, problem solving and a positive self-image (Blair, 2000; Chathukulam & John, 2002; Fung & Wright, 2001). These influences take place at the microlevel of the individual. The literature suggests that the lessons, skills or values learnt in sport can also be applied in other areas of life such as the workplace, at home or at school (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Eccles & Templeton, 2002; Holt et al. 2011; Smith & Smoll, 1997). If you look at this from the viewpoint of the mesolevel of Bronfenbrenner's theory, this implies that if the values or skills are used in other areas, the connections between the microsystems will be strongly linked and development can take place. Bronfenbrenner's theory also mentions that the different systems are interrelated, therefore, not only do the systems influence the individual, the individual influences the systems as well.

Bronfenbrenner's macrosystem allows one to understand the dynamics of sport. At the macrolevel, the political economy of South Africa has impacted on society. For example, apartheid has had an impact on factors such as poverty, education and the exclusion of people in areas such as sport. In this regard the literature informs us that sport can be used as a mechanism of social control. The structure and values of sport have also been largely shaped by those who hold the power and who are in control of its allocation. This can be aligned to Bronfenbrenner's theory that the macrosystem has an impact on how an individual lives. Both colonialism and the apartheid regime's discriminatory policies which excluded the

majority of the population from the benefits of resources such as sport, has left black people in the situation that they find themselves in today. Despite South Africa's new democracy, the majority of people remain disadvantaged, despite representative democracy, and are still subjected to the poverty and inequalities of the past. This is frequently attributed to our current government's capitalist approach. Unless these broader macro processes are challenged, previously disadvantaged individuals will never be liberated. This perception is aligned to Amartya Sen's (1999) view of development as freedom, which infers that unless people are liberated from the controls of others, they will never be free. This means that development must be equated to freedom and liberation.

Even though individual development can occur through the use of sport programmes, we need to remember that macrosystem dynamics impact on the microlevel and therefore the development of individuals. If we want real development to occur, there need to be changes within the macrosystem as well. The chronosystem refers to changes over time, which can have an effect on the development of individuals. If there are changes within the macrosystem there will eventually be changes within the chronosystem and over time, development can occur.

The theory of Bronfenbrenner together with the PYD framework suggest that sport could lead to development of the individual and that this in turn might be transferred to their community. However, one needs to examine the extent to which sport can lead to positive outcomes as well as the mechanisms taking place, which may result in development of the individual. The Athlete-Coach relationship therefore also needs to be examined as this plays a role in determining the success of a sport development programme aimed at positive transformation. This relationship can also play a role in the extent to which development takes place within the individual.

Smoll, Smith, Barnett and Everett (2003) explain that the positive outcomes explained in the Athlete-Coach relationship have been derived from the PYD paradigm. Jackson, Grove and Beauchamp (2010), have linked development of character, technical competencies, psychological abilities and physical abilities with a positive relationship between the athlete and the coach. One needs to think what would happen if this relationship was negative. Negative development can occur if the relationship with the coach is negative. The Athlete-Coach relationship affects the individual in terms of psychological attributes, physical competencies and technical competencies (Smoll, Smith, Barnett & Everett (2003).

Effective coaching has been linked to development of character, high self-esteem, competence and social engagement (Côté & Gilbert, 2009). Developmental research has also placed importance on positive relationships with adults and role models bringing about positive development of an individual (Benson, Scales, Hamilton & Sesma, 2006). Peterson (2004) noted that sport programmes have the ability to lead to positive youth development. The most important factor resulting in this and the success of all development programmes among the youth relies on the personal attributes and characteristics of the person who is leading the programme. The qualities of an effective coach who can lead an individual towards development, have been defined as “the consistent application of integrated professional, interpersonal, and intrapersonal knowledge to improve athletes’ competence, confidence, connection and character” (Côté & Gilbert, 2009, p. 316).

It seems that the Athlete-Coach relationship has such a large impact on the development of the individual in many aspects. I would then propose that because of this, the relationship between the athlete and the coach is the most important determining factor in developing the individuals’ sport skills, life skills, values, character, mental status and wellbeing. Therefore one needs to look carefully at this relationship when developing, monitoring and evaluating a sport development programme.

There are limitations to the Athlete-Coach relationship and its influence on the development of the individual. Coaches have criticized the goals of PYD as being far from reality (Cushion, Armour & Jones, 2003). Jones and Wallace (2005) have argued that one cannot measure the life skills or self esteem of athletes. These authors articulate that PYD may be a goal that is unattainable or unreachable and the depiction of coaching is an unclear reality (Cushion, Armour & Jones, 2003; Jones & Wallace, 2005).

### **3.6 Conclusion**

In conclusion, the PYD paradigm views youth as capable individuals, ready to engage with their communities, able to move towards positive living conditions if given the resources to do so. Bronfenbrenner sees individuals as influencing their environment as well as being influenced by it. Furthermore the nature of the Athlete-Coach relationship seems to be an important aspect of the transformation, growth and development that athletes experience. I propose to use each of these three concepts to interpret my data.

## **CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Qualitative research methods were used for this study and a selective and purposive sampling method was used to identify the participants. The method of the study will be discussed in detail and the reasons for selecting this type of method will be presented.

This chapter will firstly examine the research questions of the study followed by the methodological tools used to conduct the research. The epistemology section will follow which discusses the philosophy underlying the chosen research method and will outline how the method used will answer the research questions. The next section will present a discussion on the research participants and the interview process. This will be followed by a discussion of data collection methods and data analysis. The chapter will conclude with an examination of ethical considerations and a discussion of issues of reflexivity and the methods undertaken to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings. Lastly limitations of the study will be examined and conclusions will then be drawn.

### **4.2 Research Questions**

The study focuses on a group of young men from a low-income community who participated in a sport Academy established for the purpose of promoting development. The study specifically seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How does this group of young men describe their experience of participating in a sport development Academy?
2. What do these young men identify as the advantages and disadvantages of participating in a sport development Academy?
3. What do these young men describe as the impact of their participation in this Academy?



4. What insights do these young men have on how sports development academies of this nature might be enhanced?
5. How do these men see the potential of sport to be used as a means through which development can occur?

#### **4.3 Research Method**

Qualitative methods were used for this research in the form of semi structured face-to-face interviews. This type of method is used to gain an in depth understanding of the context within which the study is taking place (Sofaer, 2002). Data analysis was conducted in accordance with the Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis Paradigm, which enables researchers to interpret the personal perceptions of individuals and to understand their specific experiences that are encountered in depth (Smith & Osborn, 2007). This paradigm is of particular value when attempting to understand personal experiences and human interactions (Finlay, 2009).

This study focuses on the experiences of seven young men between the ages of 19 and 29 years from rural Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN) who have taken part in a sports development academy. They have all been involved in the Academy since 2009 when it was first established.

The founder of the Academy was also interviewed so that I could gain a more detailed understanding of the Academy in terms of its overall aims and the types of activities taking place. Although the interview with the founder was not the main focus of the study, this interview assisted in providing valuable information about the rationale for establishing the Academy and its structure and function. This data (which is presented in the following chapter) helps to contextualize the findings reported, following the interviews with the young men who participated in the Academy.

#### 4.4 Epistemology

Epistemology concerns itself with what knowledge is and the methods that are used in acquiring knowledge. In other words it is the philosophy underlying the research methodology and research method. As qualitative methodology concerns itself with understanding the social experiences of groups and individuals, it does not rely on gathering measurable data and uncovering general laws of nature but focuses on understanding social and cultural phenomena from the perspective of the people themselves who are involved in different activities (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Carter & Little, 2011). Such an approach enables a researcher to examine a particular case within its specific context using a variety of different methods to source information. Qualitative methods help researchers understand people and the social and cultural contexts in which they live (Smith & Osborn, 2007). The goal of understanding a phenomenon from the point of view of the participants and its particular social and institutional context is lost when textual data are quantified (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Neuman, 2000).

This research draws predominantly on the Interpretative and Phenomenological Paradigm in order to understand the experiential reality of the young men who took part in the Academy. This research paradigm is appropriate for a study of this nature since it allows for the gathering of information relating to subjective experiences and human interactions of population groups in a particular setting (Theron & Whetmore, 2005). The aim of this paradigm, according to Smith and Osborn (2007), is to explore the personal world of individuals and to gain a sense of their perspective. The researcher has an active role in this type of research and is trying to understand and explain the meanings of events and experiences of individuals. The researcher attempts to explore the individuals' personal account or perception of an event (Smith & Osborn, 2007).

## 4.5 Method Appropriateness

Qualitative methods and the Interpretative Phenomenological Paradigm were used for this study for a number of reasons. Interviewing participants face-to-face allows one to understand the circumstances that the participants find themselves in as well as their daily activities. Quantitative methods on the other hand would not have been as relevant to the research topic as these methods are designed to gather information of a more statistical nature (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The use of the Interpretative Phenomenological Paradigm allowed me to elicit a detailed description of the lived experience of the young men. Conrad (1987) explains that this paradigm allows one to gain an insider's view of the experience of an individual. Whilst gaining an insider's view can be difficult to interpret completely, it enables one to gain perception into the personal world of an individual (Smith & Osborn, 2007).

There were however limitations to using this method. I had to fly to Durban from Cape Town and spend a few days in Pietermaritzburg while conducting the interviews. I also had to pay for the use of a car. I hired a translator for the interview process. This was a costly and time-consuming method. General limitations of qualitative methods according to Babbie and Mouton (2001), is that this method can be emotionally draining on the researcher when conducting interviews with disadvantaged individuals. Furthermore, this method of research has been accused of being subjective. The researcher needs to be careful and be objective during questioning and not direct questions according to his or her world-views, morals or values. The ethical principles that I considered will be discussed towards the end of this chapter.

Coyne (1997) notes that with regards to qualitative methods and sampling procedures, the methodological tools are not described as precisely as they are when using quantitative methods and there is a lack of clear principles and guidelines that can lead to absence of

clarity. The use of qualitative methods has also been criticized because the results of the research are neither credible nor useful if the research was not designed or executed appropriately (Sofaer, 2002). Other limitations of qualitative research that have been found, is that the data analysis section of this type of research is challenging and it cannot be treated as one would treat quantitative results. In other words, one must be careful not to generalize or make assumptions when analyzing the data (Sofaer, 2002).

#### **4.6 Sampling Procedures**

A purposive and selective sampling method was used to select the participants of the study. This type of sampling involves non-random selection that is used to achieve a specific goal (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Coyne (1997) notes that selective sampling and purposive sampling are the same. Patton (1990) notes that all sampling methods in qualitative research can be referred to as a purposive sample because all studies of this nature involve an in depth study on small samples and they are therefore selected purposefully.

The reason for purposive and selective sampling methods according to Coyne (1997) is that the researcher selects the participants according to the aims of the specific study. The function or role in the organization, age, gender and status may be starting points for selecting participants (Coyne, 1997). Patton (1990) notes that purposive sampling allows studies to be in depth and allows meaningful data to be collected. He further notes that the issues, which are important to the purpose of the research, can be studied in more detail when using this method of selection.

The reason for the use of a purposive and selective sample was to study the experiences of the athletes who have been in the Academy for the longest period of time. I used this method because I wanted to examine the experience of a group of athlete's who have been in the Academy since it started. The founder gave me the names and contact

details for seven athletes. The insight of these young men would be more valuable towards answering the research question compared to someone who has only been part of the Academy for a shorter period of time.

I made contact with the seven athletes of the Academy who all agreed to participate. I then set up interviews with them at a suitable time. At the beginning of each interview I explained the research to each individual and they were given a consent form informing them of the research, their willingness to participate and their right to withdraw at any time for whatever reason. All of the athletes signed the informed consent form. See informed consent form attached as Appendix A. I had heard of some of the athletes through being involved in the same sport myself; there was only one participant that I had met previously. I think this had an influence on his responses to the questions that I asked, he seemed very open and willing to answer and elaborate on all the questions that I asked him.

#### **4.7 Research Participants**

All seven athletes of the Academy were black isiZulu speaking men between the ages of 19 and 29 years. The founder of the Academy gave me the names of the athletes who have been involved since it started. I contacted the athletes via telephone and set up interviews with them. See characteristics of participants in Table 4.1. Even though the athletes gave consent for their names and the name of the Academy to be used, I decided to change their names as a precaution.

**Table 4.1 Characteristics of Participants in the Study**

Name	Age	Siblings involved in the academy	Level of Achievement in sport	Present activity in terms of work and sport
Bongani	27	No	Gold medal Dusi Canoe Marathon (Top 10 placing)	Head coach of the academy; competitive in canoeing and other sports
Fundani	25	No	Podium position Dusi Canoe Marathon (Top 3 placing)	Professional Canoeist
Sifiso	21	No	Top 20 in the Dusi Canoe Marathon	College student; competitive in canoeing and other sports

Lindani	21	Yes, 6 brothers are involved in the academy	Podium position in running races	Competitive in canoeing and other sports
Khwezi	21	No	Podium position Triple Challenge (multisport event)	Sportsman and student studying at a college
Andile	19	No	Gold medal Dusi Canoe Marathon (Top 10 placing)	Coach assistant; competitive in canoeing and other sports
Dumisile	29	No	Achieved 2 <sup>nd</sup> place in Triple challenge (multisport event)	Running league coordinator

The research was conducted in Pietermaritzburg in KZN during November 2012. Each face-to-face interview lasted between one hour and one and a half hours. See interview schedule attached as Appendix B.

The founder of the Academy was also interviewed during this time and the interview was approximately two hours long. See attached as Appendix C. The interviews with the athletes took place at the Natal Canoe Club in the conference room. The interview with the founder took place at a coffee shop in the town of Pietermaritzburg.

#### **4.8 Data Collection**

I contacted the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) to enquire about possible translators. The Psychology Department at UKZN gave me a name and contact number of a third year isiZulu speaking student. I then employed her and paid her remuneration (agreed on prior to interview) to be present during the interviews and translate when necessary. She also signed a form indicating that she could not discuss the interviews to anyone. Interviews were audio taped using a laptop. I transcribed the English interviews and the translator transcribed the isiZulu interviews.

I also conducted a semi-structured interview with the founder of the Academy. I contacted him and set up an interview after all the athletes had been interviewed. I recorded and transcribed the interview.

#### **4.9 Data Analysis**

After completion of the interviews, the data was collated and organized into themes and categories. It is presented in chapter six in the form of a mind map, text and quotations, which will then enable analysis of results.

The data was examined and different points of interest were identified. In other words, the important factors found in the data that relate to answering the research question were identified. The information was tabulated and ranked in order of importance in terms of answering the research question, and different categories were developed. Associated



categories and themes have been linked to key concepts identified in the data. Thereafter explanations for findings were suggested by reflecting on the theoretical framework and empirical fieldwork (Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. Braun and Clarke (2006) note that thematic analysis provides important skills that can be helpful when analyzing a study of a qualitative nature. The authors state that this method is qualitative and analytical and is used to organize and order data. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a method for “identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (p. 79). Not only does this method allow for the interpretation of different components of the research (Boyatzis, 1998), it also arranges and allows for an in depth explanation of the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The process of encoding the data was performed and will be presented below, as summarized by Braun and Clarke (2006).

1. The data was transcribed and I familiarized myself with the data by noting down preliminary ideas whilst reading the data repeatedly. Whilst doing this I was aware of patterns and meanings that were immersing and presenting themselves in the data.
2. I then generated initial codes after I had a deep understanding of the data and then collated the data into the applicable codes. Codes refer to fascinating and meaningful segments or elements that are present in the raw data. The data is arranged into significant groups.
3. The next step was to search for themes within the data. This was done by looking closely at identified codes, and grouping them into broader topics or themes. I then collated the codes into possible themes, and gathered all the data applicable to each prospective theme.
4. The themes were then revised. A thematic map of analysis was produced, by examining if the themes were aligned with the codes and the data set. It is important to examine if there are

clear distinctions between the different themes and to review if the data within each theme is meaningful and coherent.

5. The themes were then named and defined through ongoing analysis. It is important to focus on presenting the importance of each theme when you “define and refine” the data of each theme (p. 92).

6. A final report of the analysis was then produced. This included selecting pertinent examples and analyzing the particular extracts whilst continually relating back to the literature and the research question. It is important to focus on presenting a non-repetitive, logical, concise and clear report of the data.

My supervisor and I triangulated the research findings by analyzing it independently and then compared the findings. This assists in ensuring better validity and trustworthiness of the data. Triangulation is a method of cross checking by using different methods or investigators (Theron & Whetmore, 2005).

#### **4.10 Ethical Considerations**

The Ethics Department at the University of Stellenbosch gave ethical clearance for the study to be conducted on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2012. The protocol number given to conduct the research was HS853/2012. The letter of approval from the ethics department is attached as Appendix D.

It is important to always uphold ethical principles when conducting research. Some authors note that it is especially important in qualitative research as the researcher aims to gain a deep understanding of the topic being researched. Disclosing the names of the participants is important to protect their confidentiality and to protect the participants from harm (Damianakis & Woodford, 2012). I made myself aware of the ethical principles and the

potential risks involved in the interview process such as emotional harm when asking questions related to a personal nature. Damianakis and Woodford (2012) explain that it is important to examine the challenges in terms of ethics as it allows for the protection of confidentiality together with generating new knowledge. According to Morse (1998) ethical vulnerability is increased when using direct quotations from participants. I was aware of this before conducting the research so I made sure that the participants agreed to have their names used as well as the name of the Academy, see attached as Appendix E. Even though I decided not to use their names or the name of the Academy, I made sure that they agreed on their names and the name of the Academy being used (before I could decide to use direct quotations), in case they became identifiable through reading the direct quotations that I have used in the data analysis section of this dissertation.

The athletes were given consent forms to sign to indicate their willingness to participate in the study once the purpose of the research was explained to them (Appendix A). All the athletes agreed and signed a form giving permission for their names and the name of the Academy to be used in this study (Appendix E). As noted previously, I have chosen to change names of the athletes of the Academy and to refrain from using the name of the Academy and the founder of the Academy. This has been done as a precaution to protect confidentiality and ensure anonymity.

The consent form (Appendix A) also informed the athletes that they may withdraw from the research at any time. I also asked the research participants if they needed emotional support from a counselor after being interviewed. None of them needed this and they were given my contact details in case they needed this at any given time. I made contact with an appropriate counseling center based in KZN prior to the interviews. They offer counseling services at no charge.

All the information regarding the interviews have been stored on my personal computer which can only be accessed using a password known to me personally. The information is also stored on an external hard drive and is password protected, which can only I can access.

#### **4.11 Reflexivity and Trustworthiness**

Williams and Morrow (2009) highlight the importance of trustworthiness in research, “The integrity of the data, the balance between reflexivity and subjectivity, and a clear communication of findings are all necessary for trustworthiness to be achieved” (Williams & Morrow, 2009, p. 3). These concepts which lead to the trustworthiness of research will be explained in detail and include examples of how I maintained them.

Integrity can also be described as adequacy or reliability. In order for this to be achieved in research, the researcher will need to clearly explain the research process so that it can be repeated. This can be attained through showing the interview schedule, explaining the recruitment procedure and describing the process of data analysis (Morrow, 2005; Williams & Morrow, 2009). I have attached the interview schedule as Appendix B in the research and clearly explained the recruitment procedure as well as the data analysis procedure in an attempt to maintain integrity of the research.

Integrity can also be established through having someone other than the researcher analyze the data and evidence should also be provided when interpretations of the data are presented (Morrow, 2005; Williams & Morrow, 2009). My supervisor analyzed the data independently and quotes were used to provide evidence of the interpretations that I made from the data. This process is referred to as triangulation (supervisor analyzing data independently), as stated previously, can be defined as a method of cross checking by using different methods or investigators (Theron & Whetmore, 2005).

There also needs to be a balance between reflexivity and subjectivity during the research process. Williams and Morrow (2009) note that there needs to be a balance between the research participants' responses or answers to questions and how the researcher interprets these results. It is further noted that biases can occur if research questions are asked in a specific way therefore leading the research to be subjective. The researcher needs to be sure to avoid subjectivity as far as possible by being aware of his or her own views and not to influence the responses according to his or her beliefs or attitudes (Morrow, 2005; Williams & Morrow, 2009). Williams and Morrow (2009) note that this can be maintained (avoiding subjectivity), by the researcher asking for feedback during the research process. During the research process I was aware of my own views on the benefits of sport (which will still be discussed later in this section) and avoided being biased during the research in a number of ways. I included advantages and disadvantages of sport as a question in the interview schedule. I continuously repeated the response of the participant and my interpretation of the meaning of the response to the participant, to make sure that my understanding of the response was correct.

Furthermore, for trustworthiness to be achieved there needs to be clear communication and application of the findings of the research. Williams and Morrow (2009) explain that this can be achieved through a clear explanation and presentation of results by using quotes to support interpretations, using quotes as evidence for interpretations, discussion of theory and practice and providing a linkage between literature and the results of the fieldwork. I have attempted to achieve this through using evidence of my interpretations by using as many quotes as possible in the research findings. I have also tried to link the current literature and certain theories with the results of the research in Chapter Six. I have attempted to maintain trustworthiness as far as possible throughout this research.

I am a canoeist myself and I run a development programme in canoeing with historically disadvantaged people in my community. I hold the belief that sport has many positive psychological benefits due to my own personal experiences in sport and due to my experience with running a development programme. I am aware that biases could occur due to this and I have avoided being prejudiced as far as possible by not only examining positive outcomes of sport but also the negative outcomes found in the literature. I have attempted to remain aware that sport may not always be beneficial and that there may be limitations to how effective it is as a vehicle for development. Through critical self-reflection and on-going research supervision, I have remained conscious of the potential for researcher bias, especially given that I am a white female masters student and a sportswoman from an upper-middle class family who lives in Stellenbosch.

#### **4.12 Limitations of the Present Study**

The group of athletes who agreed to take part in the study are involved in a sport development programme but their experiences cannot necessarily be representative of all participants in other sport development programmes.

The fact that the founder of the programme provided me with the contact details of the athletes, therefore knowing that I was interviewing them, could have prevented the athletes from reporting negative aspects of the Academy or of their experiences. Some of the athletes were not able to speak in English and the process of speaking through a translator is not as personal as speaking directly to someone. For instance it is difficult to perceive the attitude and personal feelings of someone if you do not understand their language. I had only met one of the athletes previously and he spoke English as if it were his first language and gave very detailed answers to the questions. This was not the case with all the athletes and I

think their descriptions could have been more detailed had they met me before or spoken English fluently.

#### **4.13 Conclusion**

This chapter has given a detailed explanation of the research process as well as the reasoning for the specific methods and paradigms used. Furthermore, the ethical considerations, reflexivity and trustworthiness, and limitations of the study have been examined.

## **CHAPTER 5: THE SPORT DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a rich description of the Academy in order to contextualize the experiences of the athletes that will be presented in the chapter that follows. The main focus of the chapter is to explain the aims, benefits and impact of the Academy as articulated by the founder of the Academy. The data for this chapter was obtained from an interview with the founder that was audio taped and transcribed. This chapter has been organized into different sections as a way of providing structure to the information provided by the Academy's founder. The chapter begins by describing the history and formation of the Academy. This is followed by the topic of sport: promoting participation and nurturing athletic talent. The next section will explain personal growth, skills development, confidence and empowerment that came up during the interview with the founder. Thereafter, educational opportunities, and economic benefits: employment opportunities and financial rewards will be presented. This will be followed by social benefits and health promotion; and the success of a development programme, as described by the founder. Lastly inter-personal relationships and challenges will be discussed.

### **5.2 History and Formation of the Academy**

The Founder of the Academy, partnered with one of the local people living in The Valley for the 2008 Dusi Canoe Marathon, which took the form of a K2 (two person canoe) race. Menzi<sup>4</sup>, used to train with the founder in The Valley and the local paddlers living in the area would join him and Menzi during their training sessions. After the founder and Menzi won the race in 2008 the founder discussed the performance of other young men from The Valley who had also competed in the race. Menzi said that many of these young local

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<sup>4</sup> Name has been changed



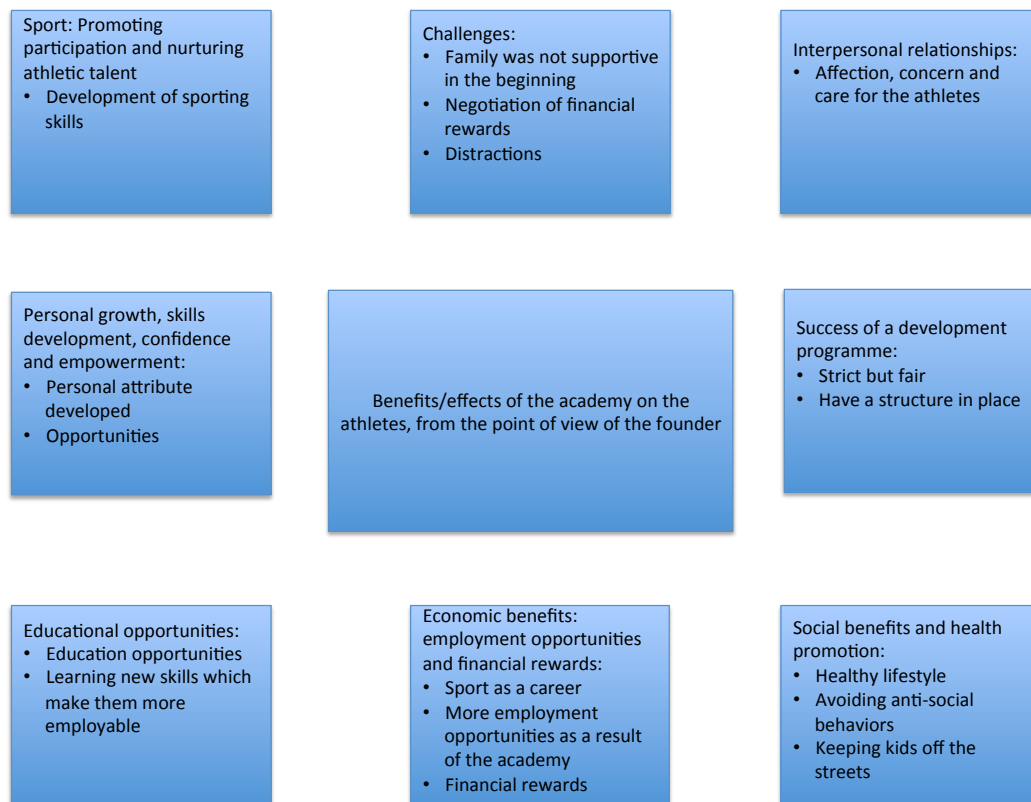
paddlers experienced problems due to their inadequate equipment, lack of knowledge of the river and poor technique. In canoeing, knowledge of the river is extremely important, there are places where you can get lost and break your boat if you do not take the correct line in a rapid and it can ruin your race. It is important to be taught by someone who has knowledge of the river, consequently practicing (or ‘tripping’ the river as canoeists refer to it) is a very important component of successfully completing the race. The founder said that he decided that it would be “*exciting*” to get ten black men in the top 20 for the 2009 Dusi Canoe Marathon. He realized that they would require proper equipment, support and coaching in order to develop as athletes and realize their sporting potential. Thus the Academy was started with the simple clear goal of enabling a group of ten young black men to adequately prepare for and compete in the Dusi Canoe Marathon by providing them with the requisite support and training.

The founder approached a private company and managed to secure sponsorship for ten athletes in the Academy. He conducted running and paddling time trials to determine which young men demonstrated the most athletic potential to be successful in the Dusi Canoe Marathon. He selected the top ten performers and invited them to be part of the first cohort of athletes to pass through the Academy. The founder hence committed himself to developing the capabilities of athletes who demonstrate talent and who were willing to work hard but who had previously not had opportunities or access to the resources they needed in order to take part competitively. The dedication of the athletes was measured by their commitment and motivation to training and performance. In other words, those who were committed to trying to do well and those who were motivated to attend training sessions were chosen to be part of the Academy. The founder also noted that he would much rather choose an athlete who perhaps was not naturally talented but was very committed compared to an athlete who was naturally talented but not committed. The founder expressed this when he said:

*“...I would much rather give them (canoeing resources) to someone who is maybe not as good but is more deserving, trying harder and more committed”*. The Academy thus started with a core group of ten young adult men, and was funded by private corporate sponsorship. The Academy was established with a tacit endorsement of the values of determination and commitment and only athletes who demonstrated these qualities were included in the Academy.

The aims and benefits of the Academy have been organized under different subsections that will be discussed in detail. A mind map reviewing key ideas expressed by the founder can be seen in Figure 5.1.

**Figure 5.1 Mind Map of the view of the Founder**



Since the establishment of the Academy in 2009, it has grown and currently there are fourteen athletes who receive training programmes, equipment, clothing, supplements and meal replacements, running shoes and food parcels for their families. The Academy also provides financial incentives for the athletes if they do well in races or reach specific goals that they have set prior to a race. This indicates that competition and promoting performance as well as goal setting are important aspects of the Academy, which are financially rewarded.

### **5.3 Sport: Promoting Participation in Sport and Nurturing Athletic Talent**

Initially the goal of the Academy was to help historically disadvantaged individuals who did not formerly have opportunities to participate in sport, to succeed in canoeing. The founder made the necessary resources available to the selected athletes in the Academy to develop their athletic potential and participate competitively in sport.

When asked how the Academy functions he explained as follows: *“there is a core of fourteen on the programme getting support from food parcels, clothing, Hi-Tec shoes, physio (physiotherapy) if they are injured, pretty much anything to be successful in sport”*.

At first when I heard him speaking about the Academy, my assumption was that the goal of the Academy was to produce elite athletes, which implied a focus on developing athletes who could win canoe races. I explicitly asked him if it is the goal to develop elite athletes. He said *“Its not actually my objective to get elite athletes, I want to see how good they can be”*. He said that there are athletes on the Academy that he could help personally, in other words he could focus only on one person and help them win the Dusi Canoe Marathon but he does not have time to do so for all athletes in the Academy. He further explained that someone like Fundani (one of the elite athletes in the Academy) can win the Dusi Canoe Marathon and he could help him do so. He said *“I have thirteen other guys on the programme that I need to worry about, to teach them life skills, like put them on the*

*programme and keep them there*". So he has indicated that being successful in sport is an important goal of the Academy, but that teaching life skills is also integral to what he is trying to achieve. He also seems to place much importance on keeping the athletes engaged in the Academy.

The importance of producing athletes who are competitive and who win races is evident from the fact that the founder said that if the athletes do well then they receive financial rewards. He, however, clarified the competitive focus of the Academy by saying, *"elite athletes is a bonus but it's not the focus"*.

It seems to me that the goal of the Academy is to facilitate the performance of the athletes and thus enable them to do as well as they can in sport, while simultaneously using sport as a context in which to teach other skills.

#### **5.4 Personal Growth, Skills Development, Confidence and Empowerment**

The founder seems to believe that the Academy provides young men with the opportunity to learn skills such as the ability to focus, work co-operatively in teams, and set and achieve goals. Furthermore the Academy encourages athletes to develop values such as discipline, perseverance, dedication and commitment. It is the founder's perception that these skills and values allow for personal growth that in turn engender feelings of self-confidence and enhanced self-esteem within the athletes. The founder articulated this perception when he said:

The aim of the academy is to *"give youth, previously disadvantaged persons, opportunity through sport. It is through sport in terms of identifying talent and giving them every means of getting the best result they could and through that they benefit. Through*

*learning life skills, focus, working hard, learning discipline, goal setting...we set goals before the race... ”.*

It is apparent that the Academy seeks to use sport as a context in which to help the young male athletes to learn skills and develop values. The founder maintains that the athletes in this Academy learn the skills and values that are associated with: working together in a team; discipline, perseverance and determination; goal setting; sustained effort and exertion; and focus. He also explicitly believes that although athletes develop these capabilities in the context of sport, they are transferable and can be applied in other settings (such as in the work and education environment). These ideas are evident in the following extract of the interview:

Interviewer: *“What lessons do you think sport teaches?”*. Founder: *“Discipline...like with goal setting, we set targets along the way... ability to focus...teamwork, like the guys look out for each other, like the tenth guy is important because he will make the team better...(success) gives the guys more confidence”*.

It is also apparent that the founder places much value on these capabilities and believes that they can compensate for a lack of formal education. He articulated this by saying:

*“I believe that the guys on the programme who don’t have matric definitely have a step forward compared to those not on the Academy”*.

It seems that the founder believes that these skills and values are learnt indirectly through being involved in sport, receiving coaching and participating in competitions. The competitive element of this Academy would thus appear to be one of the factors that the founder believes contributes to the effectiveness of the sport development programme.

The athletes in the Academy find employment as a result of the Academy but they are also learning new skills such as responsibility, organization and management. This view is supported by the founder's explanation:

*"I have given the guys in the academy more responsibility. I've given Bongani (the head coach) an assistant now, Adile, and I'm doing it more so. The trustees said its fine because it's empowering".* The founder further notes that *"I have got a running league now and Dumisile is the running league coordinator"*.

The founder also said that he tries to encourage the athletes to think for themselves and make decisions. He said, *"I'm trying to get them to think for themselves..."*. Thus there seems to be a focus on developing initiative and autonomy.

According to the founder, through their involvement in sport, the athletes are able to build self-confidence and become self-reliant. The founder's perception is that these feelings of confidence and self-reliance together with the skills the athletes acquire, empowers them to eventually provide for themselves and their families by finding employment opportunities.

The founder further explains that one of the benefits of sport is that it allows individuals to demonstrate and be praised for their physical capabilities as opposed to their academic and intellectual abilities. Thus individuals who are marginalized by poor performance at school are afforded an opportunity to achieve success and recognition through sport. He articulated this by saying, *"not everyone is good at academics so you are not judged by your brain you are also judged by your physical ability"*.

The founder explains that the athletes in the Academy need to be committed to training in order to stay in the Academy. He says, *"Now I've given Bongani (the head coach) the authority to cut them out if they don't go to training..."*. The founder further explains

*“I’ve said to Bongani if you cut the guys out you will be helping them, life isn’t easy...I’ve told Bongani he can say ‘I (the founder) said’ because I trust his judgment”.* This explanation by the founder could possibly suggest that he is developing the athletes’ personal growth and that he is giving them more responsibility and teaching them skills. From what the founder says, it is apparent that commitment is an important aspect of the Academy. It seems as though he is also trying to empower the athletes through teaching them skills such as *“life isn’t easy”*. This is also teaching the athletes about leadership and decision-making.

The maintaining of boundaries and setting of standards is important in the Academy, if the athletes do not conform to the requirements they are excluded. This creates a boundary between who is in the Academy and who is out; it is not unconditional participation. There are also limited resources available in the Academy so not everyone can be helped. Therefore a selection process needs to be in place where some men are included and some must be excluded. The founder supports this view when he says:

*“I’ve only got limited products like USN (Ultimate Sports Nutrition) so I can’t help everyone and I would much rather give them to someone who is maybe not as good but is more deserving, trying harder and more committed”.*

So the athletes in the Academy who do not show commitment and motivation to training are excluded. It seems that these traits are more important to the Academy, or to the founder, than performance. Not only does this create an ethos of hard work and dedication in the Academy, it also makes the Academy elite. This is an important part of the success of the Academy, the fact that there are rules and values that need to be followed.

## 5.5 Educational Opportunities

The athletes have the benefit of educational opportunities through their involvement in the Academy. The founder believes that through these educational opportunities, the athletes acquire skills and knowledge which increase the chances of them finding formal employment. For example, one of the athletes had the opportunity of attending university.

The founder says *“I want to get the paddlers laptops now and send them on basic courses like excel, just to put something on their CV (Curriculum Vitae) as well but I haven’t got there yet”*. This statement indicates that the founder knows the value of learning skills beyond canoeing in order to find gainful employment. This is a future goal that the founder is thinking of in order to enable the athletes to be more employable. This indicates that sport is not the only aim of the Academy.

The founder refers to education when he said *“if they want to study it will be paid for...there is a guy in Joburg (Johannesburg) doing supply chain management...Sifiso is studying here but they gave him a bursary”*. The founder realizes the fact that one needs more than sport skills to find employment, such as education. It seems that the founder realizes that one cannot only develop one aspect of an individual, such as sport skills, in order to develop individuals. Implicit in what the founder says is the idea that sport itself has limitations and that additional skills training needs to be included if sports programmes are to achieve their goal of empowering and developing individuals.

## 5.6 Economic Benefits: Employment Opportunities and Financial Rewards

From the interviews with the founder, it appears that the Academy has had a number of positive economic impacts on the athletes who participate in it. For example, some of the athletes have had employment opportunities and received financial rewards as a direct result



of their involvement in the Academy. The founder has explained that from his experience with running a development Academy he thinks that sport not only teaches one skills that make one more employable but that it can increase your opportunity of being employed. The founder explained this more clearly when he said that *“being in the Academy you get opportunities like job placements”*. He further notes, after being asked what the benefits of sport are, that *“The spin offs, are the opportunities it has given like jobs....some of the guys have drivers licenses”*.

The founder's perception is that the athletes are employed because of their involvement in the Academy. From what the founder says it would seem that when potential employers see athletes achieving at competitive sport they assume that the athlete is hard working, honest and reliable. It is as if people assume that because someone is good at sport they must be a good potential employee because sport requires dedication and commitment, which are characteristics required in the workplace.

The founder believes that participation in sport provides the athletes with exposure and provides them with a stage on which to demonstrate their determination and capacity for hard work. This exposure enables employment opportunities, as illustrated in the following story that the founder recounted during the interview:

*... this guy was one of my top guys, he came 13th on the Dusi...he now works at Florida Lake Canoe Club as development coach. I have five guys now who have moved to other positions.*

He further explains that:

*Then there was another guy...I would tell him things like when I come fetch you, open the gate beforehand, don't wait to be asked. Then he came along on one of the Academy*

*fundraisers. He got to know the CEO of Computer Share who is one of the trustees of the Academy...One day I got a call from this guy (The CEO) and he said, I've got one of your Zulu's here (the founder laughs)...he said tell me about the guy.*

The founder further explained that he told his CEO that Bafana<sup>5</sup> “*was 36th on Dusi so he knows hard work*” and “*He is the guy who adds value no matter what capacity*”. The founder then explained that his CEO hired him purely because he was part of the Academy, he said:

*Then he (CEO) put the phone down and hired the guy without even talking to him. This is just from knowing that he is on the Academy and is an achiever. He doesn't even have a matric. Last week he became permanent so he is earning R7500 a month, gets medical aid.*

The founder explains, when talking about the relationship between sport and development “*there is also a career in professional sport. You can make a living from it; it's actually a career. It's a good lifestyle but also a career, like Fundani he gets a retainer and is a professional sportsman*”. There are also financial rewards for doing well in the Academy, “*if they do well they get paid*”.

The Academy has created employment opportunities within the organization; learning new skills through work develops the athletes in the Academy. The founder is also empowering the athletes by giving them responsibility within the organization and teaching them leadership because they are then in control of their own development. This view was expressed when the founder said “*I have given the guys in the Academy more responsibility. I've given Bongani (the head coach) an assistant now, Adile...Dumisile is the running league coordinator*”. The fact that the athletes are now running the Academy makes it sustainable.

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<sup>5</sup> Name has been changed

## 5.7 Social Benefits and Health Promotion

Other benefits that the athletes gain from the organization can be categorized as social benefits. This ranges from having a healthy lifestyle to avoiding anti-social behaviors. This clearly suggests that the founder is of the view that involvement in sport has a positive impact on the social aspect of individuals involved in the Academy.

The founder articulated this view when I asked him what he thought the benefits of sport were. His response with regards to the Academy's athletes was *"Well for these guys there is no time for other stuff...healthy lifestyles and a big factor is role models"*. The founder explains that all the commitments that go hand in hand with sport have a positive impact on the lives of historically disadvantaged persons. He further explains that not only does it prevent the athletes from being involved in anti-social behavior but also that they are role models for the younger generation in the community. He says *"They are role models to the younger one's, there is no drinking, drugs...no gangsters, its pure clean living, they are big role models"*. Being involved in sport, according to the founder, promotes pro-social behavior and prevents the athletes from becoming involved in anti-social behaviors such as joining gangs, drug use and alcohol abuse.

The founder says, *"Sport keeps kids off the street, gives them a purpose..."*. He is explaining that through the Academy and being involved in sport, the athletes are given a purpose and are involved in other activities instead of those occurring on the street. When the founder says it keeps them off the street he is referring to the negative behaviors that are associated with poor disadvantaged communities such as alcohol and drug abuse.

## 5.8 Success of a Development Programme

The founder explains from his experience what he thinks will make a development programme successful. He shows through his explanations that he looks further than the individual doing well in sport but is also aware of the impact that the programme has on the individuals and their families.

The founder exclaims that when you start a development programme “*you have to be strict but fair, you can be taken advantage of*”. He further notes that

*The disadvantaged kids are so desperate so you have to put a structure in place, you can't help everyone. Like there is one guy who has no parents and is the head of the household who really needs the food parcels but he wasn't good enough...Take emotion out of it, you've almost got to be cruel to be kind.*

The founder further notes that “*you want to help everyone...but it doesn't work like that*”. The founder says that there are many positives about running a development programme but there are also negatives. He says “*the emotional fulfillments are massive but there are huge dips*”. He tells a story about one of his athletes who was coming first in the under 18 category in the Dusi Canoe Marathon and he ended up breaking his boat and not finishing the race. He says “*the prize money was R9000, that's huge for someone who lives in a house with no electricity and running water*”. The founder further explains that when people heard about the story of the athlete not finishing the race, they gave donations. He said someone picked the paddler up after he broke his boat and then asked him what he would have done with the prize money, “*He said he would have bought a pair of jeans...they pump money back into the family, its very emotionally fulfilling*”. The founder thus shares his observation of how the athletes give their money to their families instead of using it for themselves

The founder also said *“in my Academy the food parcels is a direct benefit from the individual to the community”*. He is not only trying to help the individuals but also their families by providing a monthly food parcel for the athletes and their families.

The founder speaks about one of his previous athletes of the Academy, Bafana. He says:

*I drove past his house the other day and they have the smallest mud house in the family. There were all these bricks lying next to the house, I asked his dad about it and he said his son Bafana sends him money every month so they can build a proper house.*

The founder further notes, *“You see they pump money back into the family, that’s real development”*. The money flows back into the family of the previous athletes so there are more people who benefit from the organization than those involved in it. Sports programmes help individuals and this in turn ripples through to the family who indirectly benefit.

The founder said he has also started a running league because canoeing is *“Such a mission, you need a bus, trailer, boats...One of my objectives of my Academy is the multiply effect...so I set it up (the running league) so I could reach more people”*. The founder has also recently started a cycling league. This indicates that it is important for the founder to help more people in the community through incorporating other sports into his Academy such as running and cycling. This could indicate a number of things. Perhaps it implies that canoeing is an expensive sport therefore it does not provide enough opportunities for people to be involved, or that canoeing is time consuming and not as easy as running (you have to practice on the river and learn to balance in a canoe). It could also indicate that a sport such as running could be more beneficial as a sport development programme because it is less expensive and easy to learn therefore more people can participate.

## 5.9 Interpersonal Relationships

The founder used certain words during the interview that I found interesting such as “my Zulu’s”, “my top guys”, “I have five guys now”, “I’ve got one other guy”, “one of my guys”, “I loved the guy”, “my guys” and “boys”. He spoke of these young men with real affection, concern and care and it is apparent to me that he was invested in each individual. He knew them, knew where they lived and knew their families. This idea will be discussed in further detail in the discussion section in chapter six of this dissertation.

## 5.10 Challenges

The main problems the founder had with setting up the Academy was with the families of the athletes. Initially, the families were not supportive as some of the athletes worked in the family as herdsmen and their families did not encourage their sons to practice canoeing twice a day. The founder said:

*The first problem I had when I wanted the guys to get in the top fifty and train for four months was with the families, they were not happy...They were not encouraging their boys to train twice a day, like some of them were cattle herdsman so with training twice a day they were tired when they got home.*

He said “some of the guys would get committed and then get distracted, like they would want too much like we would have to negotiate but in a good way”. He said that they were trying to negotiate more money, as the Academy would pay incentives to the athletes. The founder also noted that the challenges “were just minor things nothing serious”. The founder introduced food parcels in the Academy for the athletes to take home to their

families. This was introduced as a solution to the parents not being supportive and it was successful.

## **5.11 Conclusion**

This chapter has given a rich understanding of the Academy. The interview with the founder has given a clear presentation of the aims, objectives and practices of the Academy. Although it was not part of my objective to gain insight into the relationship that the founder has with the athletes, it has become apparent that interpersonal relationships are present within this Academy. This idea will be discussed further in the chapters that follow.

## **CHAPTER 6: “*BUILDING PEOPLE, TEACHING THEM LIFE*”: THE EXPERIENCES OF ATHLETES IN THE SPORTING ACADEMY**

### **6.1 Introduction**

In this chapter I will present and interpret the data I collected from the interviews with seven young men who participated in the Academy. I will then go on to discuss the experiences of the athletes in light of the research questions. Conclusions will then be drawn.

As explained in chapter four, analysis of the raw data enabled me to identify a number of broad categories and themes in the research. Participant responses were then coded and categorized into the identified themes accordingly. The emergent themes included sporting and technical skills; personal impact on the athletes: values and life skills; social aspects: interpersonal skills and connectedness; exposure to educational opportunities; economic aspects; relationship with the founder; and family aspects and challenges. Each of these themes is discussed in detail below.

The research findings presented below indicate that the overall experience of the athletes in the Academy was extremely positive and they perceived benefits on many levels. The majority of the athletes reported that the Academy had changed their life for the better in a number of ways. The following statements indicate the positive influence of the Academy on the athletes: Bongani said, “*It has helped us a lot*”, Fundani reported “*It changed a whole lot of things for me*” Dumisile said “*The Academy, I can say it changed my life in a lot of different ways*”.

The athletes seem to have idealized the Academy and the founder of the Academy, which may have made it difficult for them to identify any negative aspects of their



experience. Even though most of the responses were positive, the athletes reported that the Academy presented certain challenges. In some instances, they explained that attitudes and beliefs of their families were an obstacle, which had to be overcome before they could participate fully in the Academy.

The athletes reflected that the Academy has had a positive influence on their lives by opening doors to employment, making them feel good about themselves and their abilities and exposing them to new experiences. This seems to have been empowering for the athletes. The Academy achieved this through teaching them life skills, interpersonal skills and values of dedication and perseverance. The Academy also seems to have improved the athlete's self-esteem and sense of agency.

The interviews have given an indication, from the athletes' perspective, of how the Academy works and why it is successful. The athletes seem to suggest that chief among the factors that contribute to the success of the Academy are: their perception that they were chosen to be part of something elite (the Academy) and were recognized by someone with status (the founder of the Academy); the fact that they felt challenged while simultaneously learning new skills; and the fact that they received food parcels for their families.

## **6.2 Sporting and Technical Skills**

From a sport perspective the athletes explained that they learnt river skills through the Academy and that they became better paddlers as a result of the coaching they received and training that they took part in. Bongani said that the founder *"taught us some river skills because he is a seven times Dusi winner"*. Fundani said *"He (founder) also taught us to trip down the river"*. Andile said *"I have achieved by being in the third position (in his age group) and being in the top ten"*. When asked what the Academy has achieved, Dumisile responded *"Its achieved a lot, if you look at the athletes they have, it's a lot of athletes"*

*getting to the point they want to be*". This is an indication that the athletes' experience of being developed as athletes/sportspeople was positive and that they were enabled to set sporting goals and achieve them. They all spoke of this with a sense of accomplishment and inherent pride.

Achieving success in sport is something that has resulted directly from being involved in the Academy. Lindani said, *"Being able to win is something I would recommend to other people"*. Not only do these sporting accomplishments seem to be important from a technical/sport capacity perspective, but they also seem to have contributed to the athletes' personal development and sense of themselves as competent. This success seems to have precipitated feelings of confidence and pride. Sifiso said: *"Through the Academy I have been able to get good training sessions and good results in the sport"*. He then goes on to say, *"Ever since it (the Academy) was introduced it has always produced a paddler in the top ten. An elite athlete like Fundani and good athletes like myself, Bongani and there are more guys coming up through the programme"*. He said, *"If it wasn't for the programme I don't think many guys would be racing as well as they are racing"*. Khwezi said *"...We have a lot of sponsors now. Guys are making good results on Dusi, they always making top ten, they (the Academy) achieved a lot"*. The athletes demonstrated a strong identification with the Academy and spoke not only of their individual accomplishments but also of the success of other athletes and the Academy's achievements. Being part of a successful organization seems to be an integral part of the athletes' experience of this Academy.

Many of the athletes refer to themselves as 'sportsman'; it appears that they placed high value on being a sportsman, which seems also to have become part of their identity. Fundani said, *"I am a sportsman full time"*. Bongani also referred to himself as a sportsman. It is as though the athletes have realized that they have acquired sporting skills, achieved in sport and been given the opportunity to exhibit their talents. This could also contribute to

development of the individual by shaping their identity and sense of themselves as physically competent and capable.

### 6.3 Personal Impact on the Athletes: Values and Life Skills

From a personal perspective the participant's involvement in the Academy impacted on their life in a number of ways. In describing their experience of the Academy, the majority of the athletes (five out of seven), reported that they were chosen or selected by the founder of the Academy, because of their sporting talent. Bongani said that *"He (founder) recognized us"* and *"he realized that there is talent in The Valley, we just need a bit of support in order to do well"*. Lindani explained that there was a group of other young men competing in time trials in the hopes of being included in the Academy and he said, *"I was selected amongst those guys"*. Fundani noted, *"He (founder) asked me to be a part of the ten group of guys that he wanted in the group"*. Andile said that he was *"selected amongst lots of guys"*. Khwezi said he was running one day and the founder saw him and tried to stop him but he didn't see him (Khwezi didn't see him), *"he started chasing me and stopped me and said you running nicely, there is a race next week and I would like you to come and do the race"*. Dumisile said that the founder told him *"We willing to take you in the team"*.

The fact that most of the athletes report on being chosen or selected gives me a sense that this is an important aspect of their personal experience. Being recognized as having talent and having their strength and potential identified seems to have had a positive impact on the athletes' self-image; building their confidence and self worth. This experience seems to be closely related to the athletes' perception that the founder of the Academy is a man of status; a man recognized as an elite athlete in his own right. The founder is a very well known paddler in the area as he has won the Dusi Canoe Marathon a number of times and is recognized as an elite athlete throughout South Africa. His position, stature and status in the

community as an athlete appears to be an important element in the success of the Academy since being recognized and chosen by him has particular meaning for the participants in this study.

The athletes also report that they were included in the Academy because they demonstrated qualities such as commitment, dedication and passion. They say that they exhibited this by working hard during training sessions and always attending sessions. Lindani said that the Academy helped him because he dedicated himself. He said, *“He (founder) saw we dedicated ourselves and we were determined and passionate”*. Andile said he was selected among a group of people who *“showed commitment in the gym”*. Implicit in the athletes’ words is recognition that the Academy reinforces values such as commitment, tenacity, dedication, perseverance, delayed gratification and hard work.

Another important factor that arose during the interviews was that the Academy helped the athletes identify their own capabilities, realize their strengths and learn new skills. Bongani reported that he never knew anything about the river before the founder helped him. He said, *“He (founder) is behind the whole thing and he taught me the river skills. I never had a gold medal before, like my best position was 54 but in 2009 I got a gold medal when I landed in the tenth position”*. Bongani also mentioned that it was a challenge for him and his teammates to make it into the top ten as none of them had achieved this before. The Dusi Canoe Marathon is an extremely competitive event as many of the top finishers are professional athletes. Furthermore, there are more than 1000 people competing in the race so finishing in the top ten is not an easy thing to do. While interviewing Bongani I observed a number of things. He seems to be very grateful to the founder because of how he has helped him achieve high goals and gives the impression that he is proud of his accomplishment in winning a gold medal in the Dusi Canoe Marathon. It seems to be important to him that his accomplishment was recognized and witnessed by others and that he was rewarded for it by

receiving a medal. Fundani said that the Academy has changed a lot of things for him. He explained *“when I entered in 2008 I knew nothing about the river but in 2009 I landed myself in the ninth position”*.

The participants report that when the founder started the Academy he set goals together with the athletes. Learning the skills and values needed to set and achieve goals thus seems to be integral to these athletes' experience of the Academy. Furthermore the experience of attaining these goals seems to be significant. In this regard Fundani said, *“His (founder) dream was to get a top fifty but we achieved more than that”*. It was clear to me during the interview that Fundani spoke with pride about his achievements and felt good about the fact that his knowledge of the sport and his skills had improved through his involvement in the Academy. The Academy seems to have afforded Fundani the opportunity to exhibit success and accomplishment. Fundani's experience was echoed by Lindani who explicitly identified the aim of the Academy as *“giving young black people opportunities to show their talent”*. He also said that it shows them what they are *“capable of”*. Finishing in the top ten in the Dusi is an extremely difficult challenge and one is awarded a gold medal for this achievement. The athletes did not think this accomplishment was possible, so achieving this award led them to believe that there are many other things that they are capable of. The athletes seem to have been empowered through their experience of being able to set and achieve challenging goals. Furthermore this experience of having learnt and mastered new skills and knowledge seems to be integral to the impact of the Academy and would seem to have contributed to feelings of pride and increased self-confidence for the athletes.

Many of the athletes noted that prior to being in the Academy they did not imagine that it might be possible for them to ever finish in the top ten places in the Dusi Canoe Marathon. The fact that an elite athlete from outside their community showed interest and belief in them seems to have made an impression on the athletes and helped them to reach

their goals. The athletes seem to have internalized this and incorporated it into their perception of themselves and strengthened their feelings of self-worth and sense of personal agency.

The athletes all speak explicitly of the skills and values that they learnt through their involvement in the Academy. Fundani for example, said, *“Sport teaches us not to give up in life because in a race, just because you are at the back of a race you can still beat a person who is leading. It has driven us to aim for that high position”*. Fundani said *“through sport I learnt not to give up and it taught me to be able to push harder as I might want something this year and not be able to get it this year then I will be able to push hard to get it next year”*. Fundani also said *“he (founder) taught us a different thing, to actually aim for the first position, so we faced up with the opportunity to become number one position, we had to train and gym a lot”*.

Fundani’s narratives seem to indicate that through participation in the Academy, he has learnt skills and values such as hard work, determination, aiming for the first position and not to give up. It also seems to have taught him to have dreams and goals and work towards them. This indicates something about self-belief and agency, the athlete has gained the confidence to aim for the first position, he believes it is possible. Fundani’s experience was reiterated by Andile, who said that being involved in the Academy has helped him to *“aim for higher things and do better”*. It seems to me that the athletes have learnt about perseverance, tenacity and determination through their involvement in sport. It is significant, however, to note that the athletes were initially included in the Academy because they demonstrated some of these skills and values. It thus would seem correct to say that the Academy reinforced these aspects rather than inculcating these capacities in the participants.

Sifiso explained what he has learnt through sport and being involved in preparing for races. He said that preparing for a race helps one develop self-discipline, determination and the values of hard work. He said *“it really helps us in terms of having self discipline, so basically values which help us through preparation and through racing experiences”*. Sifiso also explained the aim of the Academy when he said, *“they want us to develop values of self discipline and hard work and determination”*. Dumisile said the aim of the Academy is *“to help everyone who is coming from disadvantaged with sport and learning skills”*.

From the interviews it is clear that the athletes believe that there is a link between the Academy and community development. From their perspective it would seem that they believe that the Academy has given them opportunities to learn certain values and skills such as self discipline, hard work, determination, respect, not to give up, aiming for a high position and accomplishment of goals, which in turn contributes to their overall development. They seem to believe that these skills and values help them to find employment and *“live their lives”*.

It was also explained by one of the athletes that sport has taught him lessons that he can use in other aspects of life. Sifiso said, *“One thing I have learnt is hard work pays off, if you train hard and you are committed to training you get good results. Like at school as well, if you study hard and put in those extra hours of late nights then you will do well in school as well”*. Sifiso also said that the aim of the Academy is:

*To help previously disadvantaged kids from The Valley to improve their lives through sport by helping us out in sports...Ja (yes) all the values, which can help us improve our lives. Their aim is for us to gain those values and to use them not only in sport but in our lives as well.*

The athletes have the perception that one can transfer skills learnt in sport to other aspects of their lives such as education and work. They are able to recognize that the benefits of being part of this Academy extend far beyond achieving in sport. Furthermore it seems to have given them opportunities of travelling, working and studying. It has also taught them skills and values which they can relate to other areas of their lives. This experience is aptly articulated by Khwezi's words when he describes the impact of the Academy as: *"building people, teaching them life so you can later get a job and live your life"*. Although Khwezi is unable to articulate how exactly these experiences have built him and or how they will help him to get a job and live his life, he seems to be aware that some personal transformation has been enabled through his experience. Furthermore he seems to be speaking as if he feels more empowered and optimistic about his future and his life as a result of these experiences.

Dumisile mentions that as a coach and an athlete *"I have to split my time and manage my time to train and organize and racing and everything"*. This is a life skill that he has learnt. Dumisile explains that taking part in national races is important for athletes as this gives them more competition and shows them their talents. Dumisile said *"I was only racing locally and if you do that no one notices you and how good you are until you race in big races with the big guys racing seriously"*. Dumisile also drew attention to the fact that competition is important in sport and thus national competitions gave them this experience. The Academy has given the athletes the opportunity to visit new places. Not only is this a new experience to them, but this could also have an impact on one's sense of themselves and the world and impact them in a different way. The athletes seem to be saying that travelling has broadened their world and given them opportunities to be recognized.



#### 6.4 Social Aspects: Interpersonal Skills and Connectedness

From a social perspective, some of the athletes reported that through the Academy they had learnt to respect other people and different cultures. Bongani said, *“If you are a sportsman you know you have to respect other people”*. Lindani said *“It helped me to be connected to people I would have not been connected to so it gave me that opportunity to communicate with those people”*. He also said that he *“learnt to interact with different people coming from different places”*.

When Lindani was asked what one must do when starting a development academy his response was *“To show respect to people and the community, and have an understanding of the people and of the sport the community seems to be engaging in”*. Andile’s response to this question was *“To have a plan and understand the people in the community and take them to a high level”*. Dumisile said that the most important thing he has learnt through sport, which he can use in other areas of his life, is respect, *“Most it’s respect, that comes first, if you don’t respect yourself, if you don’t respect other fellow athletes, if you don’t respect everyone then nothing, you won’t go anywhere”*.

One participant, Andile, said that being involved in sport has *“prevented me from doing drugs and other unnecessary things”*. Khwezi said, *“The Academy taught me a lot of things about life, like to meet a lot of people, to not do bad things. Maybe if I wasn’t in the Academy I would be in jail”*. The athletes seem to be acknowledging that they believe that being involved in the Academy has helped them to be involved in pro-social behaviors as opposed to criminal activity or anti-social behaviors.

## 6.5 Exposure to Educational Opportunities

Many of the athletes report that opportunities to go to school, study, and advance their education were enabled via their participation in the Academy. Sifiso, for example, noted that he was given a bursary from the Academy to study. One participant, Bongani reported that they could do anything they wanted if they had a matriculation certificate and that the Academy would support them financially. Bongani elaborated and noted that *“there are lots of advantages...Anyone who has finished a matric can go further with their studies and the Academy will pay for it”*. Fundani also noted that the founder gave him the opportunity to go to school.

Lindani said that the Academy also encourages them to go to school. When asked what the aim of the Academy was he said *“They giving young black people opportunities to show their talent, because there is a lot they are helping with. Also get them to school”*. Another athlete explained that through coaching in the Academy he is now able to study sport management due to what he has learnt at the Academy. One of the athletes, Andile, said that he has learnt to speak English, as this is the language they communicate in within the Academy. Their first language is isiZulu. It was apparent from the way that Andile speaks that he believes learning English will make him more employable.

## 6.6 Economic Aspects

The athletes report that they were given economic opportunities as a result of their involvement in the Academy. Dumisile reported as follows: *“the Academy I can say it changed my life in a lot of different ways. Without the Academy I couldn’t be here and have things I have now”*. One of the athletes explained that they received things (material objects) that they did not have prior to their involvement in the Academy. Lindani said:

*My personal experience with this programme is that it helped me a lot financially and at home. Since there were things we would ask at home and we could not get it because of financial problems.*

When asked what the aim of the Academy was Lindani explained “ *the Academy wanted to provide us with the things we did not have, since they found us struggling financially*”. In this respect Khwezi said that the Academy “*achieved a lot*”.

The athletes report that they receive food parcels on a monthly basis to help them and their families as a result of their participation in the Academy. Bongani said, “*We get food parcels to give to our families*”. Sifiso said, “*Before we never got proper equipment, nutrition, training programmes or opportunities to practice on the river because we never had transport to go there*”. The Academy has given these men the resources needed to compete in sport. The athletes are also provided with canoeing equipment. Bongani said, “*They buy us equipment, any kind of equipment that we want*”. This refers to equipment needed for paddling such as canoes, paddles, life jackets, splash covers, shoes and clothing.

It was also reported that through the Academy the athletes were able to receive personal sponsorships. Fundani said, “*He (founder) develops us to achieve and move forward, like me, helping me get my own sponsors and move forward*”. Fundani said that if it were not for the Academy he might not even have been involved in sport. He said, “*I don't think I would have been where I am because I would have had no sponsors and no equipment that I actually have today*”. The athletes are saying that they need certain equipment in order to develop as athletes. This indicates that resources are needed in the sport of canoeing, in order for them to succeed or excel in the sport. This could also be the case in other sports like cycling, where a lot of equipment is needed.

The athletes reported that they were given opportunities to be involved in other sports and travel to other provinces in the country for races. Sifiso said *“I have had opportunities of getting involved in other sports such as mountain biking and trail running and also opportunities of travelling because the Academy has given us opportunities to go to races in Cape Town, Joburg (Johannesburg) and even as far as Upington”*. Dumisile said, *“Like before I couldn’t race all over, it was limited, I couldn’t pay myself”*. The athletes did not have transport or money for entries for these experiences prior to the Academy.

Some of the athletes were given employment opportunities within the Academy. Bongani has become the head coach of the Academy in place of the founder and informed me *“I am working now six days a week as the coach of the Academy”*. Andile has been employed as the coach’s assistant. Another project within the Academy is a running league where they have children from different schools involved. Dumisile is employed as the coordinator of the running league. He has a few people who work under him who are also part of the Academy. Sifiso used to work as a running coordinator of the running league and noted, *“he (founder) and the Academy gave me the opportunity to coordinate the running league”*. The Academy has helped some of the athletes by giving them employment as well as teaching them skills, which make them more employable. Bongani said *“They also help us with things like getting a drivers license”*. A driver’s license is also something that can make one more employable.

One of the athletes, Sifiso, explained that they have learnt things in sport, which can be used in other areas of life. When asked the question: *“What have you learnt in sport that you can use in other aspects of your life?”*. His response was:

*For example guys like Bongani, he was in the programme and through the programme when it was first introduced he finished in the top ten in the Dusi and after that*

*he went home and built himself a house and bought furniture and everything and now recently he has bought himself a car. So ja (yes), he has improved his life.*

Sifiso was asked whether or not it was the Academy that helped Bongani do all of that, his response was *“Ja (yes) it has helped him do all of that, I think so. Guys like Fundani as well, he has also built himself a house, has furniture and a car. So ja (yes) it helps us improve our lives”*.

## **6.7 Relationship with the Founder**

Throughout the interviews the athletes spoke about the role of the founder in the Academy and the importance of his interaction with them. This was an unanticipated aspect of the data but seems to indicate something important about the relationship between the participants and the founder and how he is seen and positioned by these young men. Khwezi, for example, says *“Without him (founder) we wouldn’t be here”*. These words seem to indicate both appreciation and gratitude towards the founder. This view is also articulated by Fundani who says *“I am so happy and so glad for what he (founder) has done for us, for me and other black men”*.

The athletes have indicated their appreciation and idealization of the founder who has helped them. This relationship seems to be an important determining factor in the success of the Academy. Although I did not enquire specifically about the founder, many of the participants spontaneously shared with me their experience of their relationship with the founder and how this had an impact on their development. Phrases that were used to support this claim include:

*“He asked me to be part of...the group”*

*“...He is behind the whole thing”*

*“...He taught us to aim for the first position”*

*“Without the founder we wouldn't be here”*

*“He develops us to achieve and move forward”*

*“I am so happy and so glad for what he has done for us”*

It seems that the athletes noticed and appreciated the time invested in them by the founder. It was important to them to have their potential recognized by an elite athlete – it was important that a man of this status invested time and showed an interest in them. It is as if they have internalized his (founder) belief in them and now they believe in themselves. They feel that he (founder) is investing in them therefore they have value.

It was interesting for me to see how much value and how important the role of the founder of the Academy is. The significance of this Athlete-Coach relationship (which was discussed in Chapter three) will be more fully explored and developed in the discussion that follows in the following chapter.

## **6.8 Family Aspects and Challenges**

It is significant that the athletes cannot talk of their experience in the Academy without making reference to their family. They speak of the impact of their achievements on the family but also note how they had to consider the needs of their family before being able to participate in the Academy. Lindani, for example, said *“it helped me to be free and be able to bring something to the family”*. In this respect the athletes also note the importance of the food parcels that are given to the families. The food parcels not only help with improving the nutrition of the athletes but are also a direct way that the family benefits from the young men expending time and energy outside the family. The athletes also speak of these food parcels

in a way that makes it apparent that they feel proud of being able to contribute to the families' well being.

Fundani explained, that in the beginning his family was a challenge. He said:

*It was hard for me to focus on sport since at home we were poor so they pushed me to get a job. All they wanted for me was to get a job so when I entered sport they saw it as a useless thing that had no benefits like money. So my family was part of my challenges.*

Fundani said his family is not a challenge now, “ *They have given me so much support, they watch me in my races. My family now see me as their hero*”. Fundani seems to be saying he is now recognized by his family as powerful / capable / strong; it has changed his positioning in the family and how he perceives and experiences himself.

Andile also acknowledges that his family was a challenge in the beginning “*There were challenges with my family as they did not understand this programme and what it would do for me like the outcomes of it*”. Sifiso said “*family time for me*” when asked what challenges he had faced. Dumisile's response on challenges was that as a coach and an athlete “*I have to split my time and manage my time*”. Dumisile also said that his family was a challenge in the beginning as they were worried about his safety while cycling and they said, “*Cars might bump you*”. After explaining to his family “*life is risky*” he said “*now they supporting me*”. Dumisile is a cyclist in the Academy.

## **6.9 Conclusion**

The participants report that, overall, their experience of being involved in the Academy was very positive. The benefits of participating in the Academy included learning sport skills and developing physically in order to perform at a higher level. Personal benefits were also experienced such as the experience of being chosen, selected and recognized in the

sport of canoeing, recognizing their own capabilities and achievements, being empowered and taking on new challenges, learning skills, life lessons and gaining positive values. Social aspects were also identified including values and skills, being connected to other people, the development of communication skills, understanding and respecting different cultures, learning respect for others and oneself, and learning the value of hard work and life skills. Exposure to educational opportunities was reported including going to school, gaining tertiary education, gaining a drivers license, and learning English. Economic benefits were presented including being exposed to employment and sponsorship opportunities, and receiving sporting equipment, which enabled them to achieve better positions in sports events. Family benefits were also experienced in the form of food parcels that were provided for the families of the participants. Besides these positive experiences, the athletes also reported some challenges, which mainly revolved around their families not being supportive when the Academy was initially established.

Factors such as learning new skills and values, realizing their own strengths and being able to identify their own capabilities, was reported as being a result of participating in the Academy. The research has clearly indicated that the Academy has had a very positive impact on the athletes and taught them perseverance, tenacity and determination.

The athletes were asked about sport development programmes in general and how they can be improved. They said that it was important to have respect for people and their community, important to understand the community and that one needs to have a plan in place in order for a programme to be successful.

The athletes were asked to identify the aim of the Academy. They responded that the aim of the Academy was to give previously disadvantaged people opportunities to show their talent, prove what they are capable of, learn sport skills and provide them with things that



they did not have before, learn values such as hard work, determination and self-discipline which they not only use in sport but that they can also use in other areas of their lives.

These men seem to see the potential for sport to be used as a vehicle for development. One athlete reported that through his work experience within the Academy he was able to study sports management, because he learnt about it through his work within the Academy. Two of the athletes built themselves houses after doing well in the Dusi Canoe Marathon, whilst their teammate said that these people improved their lives by building houses as a result of being involved in the Academy.

The overall response of being involved in the Academy was positive, with a few challenges presented. The athletes place importance on their relationship with the founder of the organization and their loyalty and affection for him could possibly be a reason for them not indicating many negative responses of the Academy. These athletes have all achieved extremely well in sport, which was one of the initial goals of the Academy.

## **CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter begins with a discussion and highlights the most important aspects of the findings. Links are made to the theoretical framework and the literature. Conclusions will then be drawn. The chapter concludes with an examination of the value of the research and a personal reflection.

### **7.2 Discussion: Literature, Theoretical Framework and Findings**

The literature reviewed in chapter two suggests that sport can be used as a possible vehicle for development. The research findings show that the athletes who participated in this study report that they had a positive experience and that the sports development programme has had a positive impact on their development (not only as sportspeople, but also psychologically, socially and economically). It was a unanimous conclusion from the participants in the programme, that their experience is that sport can be used as an effective tool for positive improvements in the lives of individuals who live in historically disadvantaged and low-income communities.

The 5Cs model explains that PYD is the culmination of competence, confidence, connection, character and caring. Jones et al. (2011) explain that the 5Cs have been recognized as one of the most important frameworks for evaluating PYD in sport. The findings of this research suggest that the athletes who participated in the Academy experienced development in all five of these areas (i.e. competence, confidence, connection, character and caring). Firstly, the athletes reported that they have learnt to be connected to other people as well as have respect for themselves and others. Secondly, they have established a positive relationship with the founder as well as having feelings of gratitude towards him as a result of his input into the Academy (this can be related to caring and

connection). Thirdly, the athletes have learnt to set and achieve their goals and aim for a high position in an event and that they have come to believe in themselves and their ability (this seems to have made them feel competent and confident). These aspects build one's character and contribute to their overall wellbeing. Fourthly, the athletes reported that they have learnt self-discipline and determination and it appears that they have also learnt leadership and co-operation skills through coaching and being involved in the Academy. These factors can be equated to building character, which is one of the elements of the 5Cs. These above-mentioned features are supported by McEwan (1991), who explains that sport builds character and refers to self-discipline, leadership, co-operation and determination as positive outcomes of participation in sport. Lee et al. (2008) also support this view and explain that "sport develops character" and that values and attitudes are developed through sport (p. 588). Henricks (2006) elaborates on this line of thought and asserts that hard work, respect, character, values and attitudes prevail through sport participation. Positive social change, which has occurred amongst these athletes, is also reinforced by the literature regarding participation in sport. Kaufmann and Wolffe (2010) maintain that sport is a mechanism for positive social change. In this regard these authors are referring to the importance of respect, awareness of others and promotion of values.

Authors such as Edwards and Edwards (2011) draw a link between participation in sport and psychological wellbeing. Malebo et al. (2007) associates psychological wellbeing with self-efficacy, optimism, satisfaction with life, positive affect and a sense of coherence. The athletes who participated in this study report a similar experience and confirm that they feel empowered and optimistic as a result of their participation in the Academy. The athletes reported the growth of personal attributes such as "*aiming for the first position*" (optimism, self belief, self esteem), "*athletes getting to the point they want to be*" (setting and achieving

goals, self-efficacy, confidence), and to “*bring something to the family*” (sense of coherence i.e. food parcels, bringing something to unite the family).

The Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach described by Ersing (2008) can be used to explain the link between the Academy and its effectiveness in promoting development. The skills, values and personal attributes that these athletes have reported learning through the Academy, can be transferred to their families, peers and other people living in their community. The athletes have also reported that they can use what they have learnt in sport (through the Academy) in other areas of their lives. As one of the athletes reported “*Their (the Academy) aim is for us to gain those values and to use them not only in sport but in our lives as well*”.

These views are further supported in the literature. A number of theorists maintain that skills learnt through sport can be transferred to other aspects of individuals’ lives (Blinde & Taub, 1999; Clark & Burnett, 2010; Greenwood et al., 1990). It has additionally been suggested that values and attitudes learnt through sport can be transferred to other environments, such as work and school (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Eccles & Templeton, 2002; Holt et al. 2011; Smith & Smoll, 1997). Ersing (2008) expands on the abilities of youth, viewing them as capable individuals, a new generation, striving to achieve their full potential, and ready to engage within their communities. The author views young people as resilient and flexible, and as having the potential to move from adverse situations towards positive lifestyles if given the necessary resources and support to do so (Ersing, 2008). This confirms the research findings that the athletes involved in the Academy can be viewed as capable individuals that have the ability to use the skills, values and life lessons that they have learnt through this Academy, and are able to implement or teach these aspects to their own communities, peers and family members.

The PYD approach views young individuals as problem solvers ready to engage with their communities (Ersing, 2008). The athletes of the Academy come from adverse living conditions where anti-social behaviors are common in their communities. This reflection is supported by the research findings because the athletes have recognized certain factors such as moving towards pro-social behaviors as a result of their involvement in the Academy. The following quotation from one of the participants supports this view. He noted that participation in the Academy “*prevented me from doing drugs and other unnecessary things*” and “*The Academy taught...To not do bad things. Maybe if I wasn’t in the Academy I would be in jail*”. Roth et al. (1998) affirm the above by noting that PYD involves “the engagement in pro-social behaviors and avoidance of health compromising behaviors and future jeopardizing behaviors” (p. 426). The research thus provides evidence that through involvement in the Academy, the athletes have been exposed to positive development influences.

Bronfenbrenner’s Eco-Systems theory can also be used to explain how development can possibly occur through participation in a programme such as in the Academy. When examining the dynamics at the microlevel, one can infer that the interpersonal relationships, social roles and events taking place can have an effect on the development of the individual. As noted previously, there is an interrelatedness between the systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Visser, 2007), therefore not only is the individual influenced by his or her environment, but the individual also has an influence on his or her environment.

When looking at the mesolevel of a system, Bronfenbrenner notes that development can occur if there are strong links between the microsystems (Visser, 2007). This infers that when the athletes of the Academy are engaged with their communities and implement what they have learnt through sport, they then apply this knowledge within their own communities. These skills are further transferred to their peers and family members, which translate into the

possibility of development taking place. When viewing the macrosystem, Bronfenbrenner (1994) notes that this refers to social factors such as culture, class and ethnicity being determining factors of development. Relating this level of interaction to the current research, it must be emphasized that the athletes of the Academy are black Africans who have been exposed to the discriminatory impacts of apartheid. This resulted in them being forced to live in marginalized areas under conditions of poverty, unemployment and crime (Bourne et al., 2002; Statistics South Africa, 2011). These conditions confirm that the mesosystem has had a negative effect on the development of these individuals.

Capacity building has been a specific aim of the Academy. This refers to the ability to make sound decisions, enhance problem solving skills and improve the ability to set and achieve goals (Mansuri & Rao, 2003). The athletes in the Academy reported that their capacity has been built in a number of areas. Having the opportunity to coach other athletes has developed their decision making and problem solving skills. Through this opportunity they have also learnt leadership skills with regards to guiding and training younger athletes and having to deal with their demands and problems. These athletes have further achieved a number of individual goals in terms of *“a lot of athletes getting to the point they want to be”*. Mansuri and Rao (2003) remind us that capacity building of this nature can equip people with the skills necessary for employment (Mansuri & Rao, 2003). The athletes in the Academy have therefore become more employable.

It is clear that the athletes in the Academy have acquired a number of resources discussed in the section above. Upward social mobility, according to Clark and Burnett (2010) can help people overcome the problems of poverty. Upward social mobility is increased through an individual's social capital. Social capital refers to the resources acquired by a group or individual as a result of being involved in a network of people. Sport programmes have been designed to generate social capital (Clark & Burnett, 2010). The

athletes report that they acquired social capital through their involvement in the Academy and that this has thus contributed to “upward social mobility”. Even though the literature emphasizes that this can help people to overcome the problems of poverty (Clark & Burnett, 2010), it is difficult to state to what extent this has taken place because it would be difficult to measure the degree of social capital acquired although the athletes do report that they perceive a change in their economic position as a result of the opportunities they have had to further their education and gain employment through the Academy.

The relationship between the athlete and the coach has been highlighted in the literature as important in determining the positive impact that sport can have on an individual. The positive factors that have been developed within these athletes include becoming better paddlers, learning skills and adopting new values. Although this is a result of their involvement in the Academy, one could question whether or not the strong relationship that they had with the founder played a determining role in this finding. The strong relationship between the athletes and the founder became clearly apparent in the research as well as the relationship between the founder and the athletes. The founder and the athletes used personal words of affection when referring to one another. As mentioned in chapter five, the founder used words that gave an impression of affection, concern and care for the athletes. In turn, the athletes showed affection for the founder by using statements such as *“he asked me to be part of...the group”*, *“he is behind the whole thing”*, *“he taught us to aim for the first position”*, *“without the founder we wouldn’t be here”*, *“he develops us to achieve and move forward”* and *“I am so happy and so glad for what he has done for us”*.

The fact that the founder uses words of affection to describe the athletes suggests that he is playing the role of a fatherly figure towards them. The literature has supported this phenomenon and provides the example where an athlete explained that her experience with

her coach was like a father-daughter relationship and that it was underlined by a personal understanding between her and her coach (Jowett & Cockerill, 2003). The literature also indicates that the Athlete-Coach relationship is essential during coaching as it plays a large role in determining performance accomplishments, self esteem and satisfaction of the athlete (Jackson et al., 2010).

One could also analyze this Athlete-Coach relationship from a more critical point of view. The founder does not use impersonal words like *men*, *athletes* or *sportspeople* when referring to the individuals who participate in the Academy. One could, therefore, concur that the use of the word “*my*” when referring to the athletes of the Academy points towards the close relationship that exists between the founder and the athletes and denotes a sense of identification with the young men. However, the use of this language might also be interpreted as an imbalance of power that the founder has over the athletes and a sense of ownership he seems to feel over the athletes. One could view this interpretation in two ways. One view is that the founder is acting as a fatherly figure towards the athletes and is concerned and protective over them. A second view is that the use of these specific words by the founder suggests a somewhat paternalistic sentiment and could possibly be seen as a type of colonialism. One could interpret this view as the founder trying to initiate the athletes into a particular economic and social system based on the principles of capitalism by preparing them to become productive workers and good employees. As there is a social order to society, one could view the founder’s practices as equipping these individuals to fit in with a capitalist society.

The founder speaks about one of his athletes, Bafana who used to be involved in the programme. He said, “*I loved the guy, I always preached to him*”. The use of the word “*preached*” is interesting as it suggests that the founder is advocating his ideas, values and principles as correct and advisable. However, besides these alternate views, the founder of



the Academy seems to have feelings of great affections for his athletes and his motivation was to provide a holistic learning environment for them.

I think that the successfulness of this specific Academy was a result of the person who designed it, his enthusiasm and success in the sport and the way in which he treated the athletes. I think the Athlete-Coach relationship is vital in any sport development programme.

Even though the perceptions and experiences of the athletes suggest that development has taken place, one must acknowledge that there are many different definitions of development. If you consider development from the point of view of Peet and Hartwick (2009) who define development as meeting of basic human needs including access to resources, enough food, shelter, safety, and being treated with respect and dignity, then this has certainly been the experience of the athletes. The athletes of the Academy have benefited socially and personally through their participation in the Academy. Peet and Hartwick (2009) also define development as improving the world and bringing change from the bottom rather than the top. This has also been achieved by the activities that have taken place in the Academy. When the founder identified a development need in The Valley, he started to identify participants and they worked together to improve the circumstances of the athletes and identified development needs and priorities.

Another definition of development is from an economic point of view, where development is viewed as a movement towards an industrialized economy and where the goal of development is the reduction of poverty (Hargreaves 1997). The Academy has impacted on the athletes economically and financially. Although this does not seem to have impacted on the community as a whole, it may be a step towards achieving this. Thus, inline with Hargreaves' (1997) definition, one can assume that development is occurring as a result of participation in the Academy and has a positive impact on the financial and economic

situation of the athletes and their families. Whilst the impact on the entire community has not changed, this is a timeous process and may, however, change over time.

The concept of development is often associated with the concept of capacity building, which is defined as having certain developmental attributes such as control over emotions, improved social skills, problem solving skills, decision making skills, improved academic performance and accomplishment of one's goals (Mansuri & Rao, 2003; UNDP, 2000). Community development has been defined as a form of "social planning", which can be used as a mechanism for transformation (RSA, 1996; Spruil, et al., 2001, p. 105). I think that the Academy can be used as a means through which community development can occur as well as capacity building of the community. Not everyone in The Valley has benefited from the Academy, but it is a starting point.

Amartya Sen (1999) defines development as the improvement of social, cultural, political and economic conditions. He also defines development in terms of freedom and explains this as individuals having control over their own affairs, creating their own livelihoods and taking part in self-governance. The findings of this research indicate that through being part of the Academy, athletes now have far more freedom to make choices and to be in control of their circumstances.

In conclusion, although it is accepted that the definition of development is broad, I am of the view that sport development programmes can play an important role in delivering development to communities. However, it is acknowledged that a wider variety of development interventions will increase the likelihood of delivering development to communities. This Academy has contributed to the improvement of many conditions in these athletes' lives but there is a lot more to be done if one wants to liberate people and change the current socio-economic and political structure of South Africa.

Against the backdrop of our understanding of development and considering whether experiences in The Valley can be viewed as real development then the answer is probably no, it has not been achieved fully. However, these athletes and their families are clearly closer to development than they were before and they have learnt lessons that may have liberated them but it is difficult to say what this liberation might result in. Perhaps these young men can teach their younger siblings the lessons and skills they have learnt and perhaps their siblings will contribute to development in The Valley as a result of this. This is all possible and the athletes may in the future continue to create their own livelihoods and take part in self-governance. However, this will require capable individuals within the community to make these decisions. I think that this Academy can bring about far more positive changes in the community over time. Although the impact at present is small, it is most definitely a route through which more profound changes in the country can occur. If one has to analyze the achievements of the fourteen athletes in this Academy, and all the other people that the Academy has assisted then one can infer that if these athletes use their skills and knowledge, it can eventually have a snowball effect. This is a more optimistic and long term view, but it is important to recognize this for future research because it can lead to the development of other programmes which can contribute to development on many levels.

The athletes all recognize that the Academy has had a positive impact on them personally (by developing their skills as sportsman and helping them develop personal skills and values), but has also had a broader impact by contributing to their interpersonal skills and providing them with educational and economic opportunities. They also recognize that their families were affected positively by this experience. The participants also placed high value on their interaction with and relationship to the founder, which seems to be an important part of their overall experience.

### **7.3 Limitations of the Research**

One of the limitations of the research was that there was a language barrier between the athletes and myself. The athletes that spoke in English could of perhaps not explained themselves as well as they would have in their own language. Even though there was a translator present for the athletes who did not speak English, it is difficult to ask someone to elaborate when a translator is translating the answer as an idea of what the athlete was saying as apposed to word for word. After I looked at the transcriptions of the isiZulu interviews, word for word, I feel that I may have asked more questions asking the athletes to give more detail if they were in my language.

Gender and culture could have also played a role but it is difficult for me to state that as a hard fact. The athletes also did not know me and some of them were not as open to discussion as others were. All of them have a good relationship and view of the founder of the Academy, which could have prevented them from reporting negatively on the Academy.

This study only looked at seven athletes therefore one cannot generalize and state that this is a representation of all sport development programmes in South Africa. Canoeing is a specific sport in a specific context and the experiences of other athletes in different contexts and sporting codes may be very different.

### **7.4 Value of the Research**

This research will add to the current literature on sport development programmes but from a different perspective, namely that of the people involved in the Academy (the so called recipients of a sport development programme) and the direct experiences of their participation.

The relationship between the athlete and the coach has emerged as fundamental to the success of a sport development programme. This assists us in understanding the actual

process leading to development of the individual. It also helps us to understand why and how development occurs.

These factors will hopefully contribute to future research in this field and help close the gap in the research of studies focusing on the effectiveness of sport development programmes. The literature has given information with regards to sport development programmes and many sources have indicated that they need to be structured. The athletes of the Academy as well as the founder of the Academy have also said that sport development programmes need to be structured. This study identified important characteristics needed in a sport development programme for sustainable and integrated social and economic development to occur. As noted earlier, the young participants indicated that they had progressed both economically, in terms of becoming more employable, and socially, in terms of acquiring values and skills. In this regard, we are reminded by scholars (Boyd et al., 1992; Kleiber & Roberts, 1981; Lee et al., 2008) that such economic and social advancement contributes to the overall development of individuals and that participation in sports programmes, such as that offered by the Academy, plays an important role in contributing to such development.

## **7.5 Future Directions**

This information, together with the results of this research, can enable one to design and structure a sport development programme correctly so that it can lead to development. This study therefore provides a framework which can be used as a starting point to conduct development programmes.

Furthermore, this case study research can be used as a framework to conduct studies on a larger scale and can also be used for comparative purposes when conducting other studies of this nature.

## **7.6 Personal Reflection**

My personal view of sport development programmes is that they are positive and can lead to positive changes in communities in South Africa. However, throughout the process of completing this research, I have read a wide range of literature sources on the topic and I am leaning towards the view that even though sport programmes are positive there are other factors to consider such as the structure of a programme and the person responsible for running it. I think for a programme to be successful to its full potential, not only do the correct structures need to be in place but the person or people who run the programme need to have certain attributes for it to realize this potential.

This research is valuable to people in the the sport development field as it shows three aspects: the current literature, the view of the founder and the view of the athletes involved in a sport development Academy. Following my research I have come to the view that the Athlete-Coach relationship is one of the most important aspects in the success of a sport development programme and the research findings have indicated that this is important in the Academy. The founder of the Academy is also aware of the factors beyond sport that are needed for development to occur. Therefore the person involved in a sport development programme is, follwoing my interpretation of the data, one of the most important factors in determining the impact of a sports development programme.

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## **Appendix A: Participant Informed Consent Form**

### **STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

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Title of research project: A qualitative investigation of adult black men's psychological experiences of a sport development program.

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Kirsten Penderis (BA Honours Psychology), from the Psychology Department at Stellenbosch University. The results will contribute to a Master's thesis. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you have been involved in the Academy as a canoeist.

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This study seeks to investigate the lived experiences of a group of young black adult (over 18 years) South African men who are involved in a community sport development program established in rural Kwazulu-Natal.

#### **2. PROCEDURES**

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

Face to face Interview: You will be interviewed by the researcher (Kirsten Penderis) and she will ask you a number of questions relating to her research. If you do not want to answer some of the questions then you do not have to. If you would like to change your mind about participating in the research and withdraw, at any time, then you are entitled to do so. The interview will last approximately one hour.

Telephone: The researcher (Kirsten Penderis) will follow up with you one week after the interview and she may reschedule another interview (telephonic or face to face) if she has follow up questions relating to the research.

### **3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

There are no foreseeable risks to you participating in the study. If there is any emotional discomfort experienced then the participant can contact the researcher and she will refer them to a qualified counselor in their area.

### **4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

The benefit of participating in the study is that it could contribute to society by showing the effectiveness of sport development programs and ways to improve them.

### **5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

There will be no payment for participating in the study but travelling costs will be covered.

### **6. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of not using names of participants in the study. The researcher will keep the results of the study on her personal computer with a code needed to access the results.

The interviews will be audiotaped and you are entitled to review the tapes and results before the researcher publishes it in her study. Again, no names will be used in the study unless you give permission for the researcher to do so.

The name of the organization, may make you identifiable. Please indicate if you give permission/do not give permission for the researcher to use the name of the organization in the study. If any participant does not give permission for the researcher to use the name of the organization then she will refer to the Academy as a 'Sport development program' or a 'Canoeing development program'.

After the interview has taken place you can decide if you give permission/do not give permission for 1) your name to be used, 2) the name of the organization to be used. The researcher will give you a form to sign indication your decision.

After the researcher has published the results, the audiotapes and interview notes will be destroyed.

## 7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

## 8. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact the researcher, Kirsten Penderis by telephone (072 253 5052/076 068 6057) or email ([Kirsten.penderis@gmail.com](mailto:Kirsten.penderis@gmail.com)). Her Supervisor Dr Jason Bantjes can also be contacted by telephone (021 808 2665) or email ([jbantjes@sun.ac.za](mailto:jbantjes@sun.ac.za)).

## 9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [[mfouche@sun.ac.za](mailto:mfouche@sun.ac.za); 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development, Stellenbosch University.

<b>SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE</b>
--

The information above was described to me : \_\_\_\_\_ by: \_\_\_\_\_ in  
(*English/Zulu*) and I am in command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to me.  
I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

---

**Name of Subject/Participant**

---

**Name of Legal Representative (if applicable)**



---

**Signature of Subject/Participant or Legal Representative**

---

**Date**

**SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR**

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to \_\_\_\_\_  
[*name of the subject/participant*]. He was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any  
questions. This conversation was conducted in English and the conversation was translated  
into isiZulu by *Vanele Zokela*.

---

**Signature of Investigator**

---

**Date**

## **Appendix B: Interview Schedule (Athletes)**

1. Tell me a bit about yourself, your family, where you grew up and where you went to school?
2. Do you have siblings? If so are they involved in the Academy? If not what are they doing now?
3. What is your personal experience of participating in the Academy?
4. What are the advantages of being involved in the Academy?
5. What are the disadvantages of being involved in the Academy?
6. What is the aim of the Academy?
7. What has the academy Achieved?
8. What has sport taught you that you could possibly use in other situations of your life? For instance at school or at work.
9. Would you recommend this Academy to other young men? Why?
10. It may have been difficult at times for you to take part in this Academy. Were there things that were difficult / challenging? If so, how did you deal with these challenges?
11. Do you think other similar sports development programmes should be started in other communities? Why? How should developers go about doing this (i.e. what do you think are the “do’s and don’t” of community sports development?)

### **Appendix C: Interview Schedule (Founder)**

1. How does the programme work?
2. So who are all the sponsors?
3. What motivated you to start the Academy?
4. What difficulties or challenges have you had?
5. What is the aim of the Academy?
6. So your aim is not only to get elite athletes?
7. What do you think are the benefits of sport?
8. What lessons do you think sport teaches you?
9. What is the relationship between sport, community development and individual development?
10. Do's and Don't's of starting a development programme?

## Appendix D: Letter of Approval Ethics Department



UNIVERSITEIT•STELLENBOSCH•UNIVERSITY  
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

### Approval Notice New Application

20-Nov-2012  
Penderis, Kirsten K  
Stellenbosch, WC

**Protocol #:** HS853/2012

**Title:** A qualitative investigation of adult black men's psychological experiences of a sport development program.

Dear Ms Kirsten Penderis,

The **New Application** received on **22-Aug-2012**, was reviewed by staff members of the REC office on **29-Nov-2012** and was approved. Please note the following information about your approved research protocol:

Protocol Approval Period: **19-Nov-2012 -18-Nov-2013**

#### **Standard provisions**

1. The researcher will remain within the procedures and protocols indicated in the proposal, particularly in terms of any undertakings made in terms of the confidentiality of the information gathered.
2. The research will again be submitted for ethical clearance if there is any substantial departure from the existing proposal.
3. The researcher will remain within the parameters of any applicable national legislation, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of research.
4. The researcher will consider and implement the foregoing suggestions to lower the ethical risk associated with the research.

You may commence with your research with strict adherence to the abovementioned provisions and stipulations.

Please remember to use your **protocol number** (HS853/2012) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your research protocol.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

#### **After Ethical Review:**

Please note that a progress report should be submitted to the Committee before the approval period has expired if a continuation is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary). Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) number REC-050411-032.

This committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research, established by the Declaration of Helsinki, the South African Medical Research Council Guidelines as well as the Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes 2004 (Department of Health).

#### **Provincial and City of Cape Town Approval**

Please note that for research at a primary or secondary healthcare facility permission must be obtained from the relevant authorities (Western Cape Department of Health and/or City Health) to conduct the research as stated in the protocol. Contact persons are Ms Claudette Abrahams at Western Cape Department of Health ([healthres@pgwc.gov.za](mailto:healthres@pgwc.gov.za) Tel: +27 21 483 9907) and Dr Helene Visser at City Health ([Helene.Visser@capetown.gov.za](mailto:Helene.Visser@capetown.gov.za) Tel: +27 21 400 3981). Research that will be conducted at any tertiary academic institution requires approval from the relevant parties. For approvals from the Western Cape Education Department, contact Dr AT Wyngaard ([awyngaard@pgwc.gov.za](mailto:awyngaard@pgwc.gov.za), Tel: 0214769272, Fax: 0865902282, <http://wced.wcape.gov.za>).

Institutional permission from academic institutions for students, staff & alumni. This institutional permission should be obtained before submitting an application for ethics clearance to the REC.

Please note that informed consent from participants can only be obtained after ethics approval has been granted. It is your responsibility as researcher to keep signed informed consent forms for inspection for the duration of the research.

We wish you the best as you conduct your research.

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at 0218089003.

#### **Included Documents:**

DESC App

**Appendix E: Permission Form: Athletes to give permission for their Names and the Name of the Academy to be used**

Please circle below whether or not you give permission:

I do/do not give permission for my name to be used when publishing the results of the research.

I do/do not give permission for the name of the organization to be used when publishing the results of the research.

Name of participant:

Date:

Signature of participant:

Name of Researcher:

Signature of researcher:



